

FREE SAMPLE

The opening pages of

1972 Dodge D100 Restoration Guide

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so you can judge the depth before you spend a dollar.

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RESTORATIONESSENTIALS

Factory-Correct Restoration Reference

1972 Dodge D100 Restoration Guide

Model Years 1972

Model year	1972 - D-Series year 1 of 9 (1972-1980 span)
Designation	D100 (2WD) / W100 (4WD) half-ton
Engines	225 slant six, 318 LA V8, 360 LA V8, 400 B V8
Front tell	New rounded treatment; round headlights
Identifiers	Round headlights in the early rounded grille - one face for 1972, shared in broad strokes with 1973-75.

Every specification in this guide was checked against factory literature, marque references, period road tests, and documented survivor vehicles. Where sources disagree or the record is silent, this guide says so rather than guessing.

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How This Guide Works

This is a **single-year restoration** guide for the 1972 Dodge D100 and W100 - one year of the third-generation D-Series (1972-1980), covered on its own because that is how these trucks were built, badged, and optioned, and how they must be restored. Specifications were checked against the marque model history, MotorTrend's Dodge truck centennial history, and factory literature. Where sources disagree, this guide prints the disagreement instead of guessing.

Scope. Covers 1972 D100/W100 half-tons in standard cab with Sweptline or Utiline beds. D200/D300 share this architecture and most procedures; their ratings and hardware differ in the particulars noted.

Where 1972 sits in the run

- **Coming in:** The 1961-1971 Sweptline-era D-Series - leaf-sprung I-beam front axle, in-cab fuel tank, last year's styling.
- **Leaving:** 1973 adds the Club Cab extended cab, standard front disc brakes on 2WD trucks, and optional electronic ignition.

Platform Snapshot

Fact	Detail
Model year	1972
Designation	D100 (2WD) / W100 (4WD) half-ton
Platform	Chrysler AD, body-on-frame
Wheelbases	115 in (6.5-ft bed), 131 in (8-ft bed)
Front suspension (2WD)	Double-wishbone, coil springs (independent)
Front suspension (4WD)	Leaf-sprung live axle (Dana 44)
Grille / front tell	New rounded treatment; round headlights
Front brakes	Front drums (2WD and 4WD) - front discs arrive for 1973
Ignition	Points; electronic ignition not yet offered
Beds	Sweptline (full-width) or Utiline (stepside)

The 1972 Register - What Makes a 1972 a 1972

- Generation launch: the full 1972 redesign - rounded styling with a scalloped hood and rounded wheel openings, echoing the 1971 Plymouth Satellite.
- Double-wishbone coil-spring independent front suspension on 2WD models replaces the leaf-sprung I-beam straight axle - the single biggest drivability upgrade in D-Series history.
- Pocketed taillights, recessed a quarter-inch so loading docks stop breaking them.
- Considerable galvanized steel in the body - the durability headline, and the reason so many of these trucks survived as work trucks into the 2000s.
- Redesigned interior: recessed gauges, larger pedals and glovebox, foot-operated parking brake.
- Wheelbases lengthened up to 5 inches; larger brakes.



- Air conditioning and cruise control optional for the first time on a Dodge pickup.
- Trim ladder: Custom, Adventurer, Adventurer Sport, Adventurer SE.

VIN, Fender Tag, and Broadcast Sheet

The VIN is stamped on the frame and carried on the door tag; the fender tag under the hood carries the option codes, and the broadcast (build) sheet - hunt under the seats, behind the glovebox, above the fuel tank - is the truck's birth certificate. Decode all three before ordering year-specific parts: on these trucks the tag adjudicates disputes, and the tag plus the broadcast sheet ends them.

Engines: The 1972 Menu

All ratings are SAE net, as published for the year. The engine in the truck is what the fender tag and the block stampings say it is - decode both before ordering parts.

Engine	Output (net)	Notes
225 slant six	Base six	1-barrel; the economy engine
318 LA V8	150 hp	The volume V8
360 LA V8	180 hp	New top small block for the redesign
400 B V8	200 hp	Top engine for 1972 (4-barrel ratings vary)

Engine note. There is no 440 in a factory 1972 light truck build sheet in the verified record used here - the 440 joins the option list for 1974. A '1972 440' truck is a swap until paperwork proves otherwise.

Restoring the 1972 engines

- 225 slant six: the leaning tower of power - simple, durable, and cheap to rebuild correctly. Check the exhaust manifold for cracks and the carburetor for worn throttle shafts.
- 318/360 LA small blocks: the volume engines. The 360 is externally balanced - keep its balancer and converter hardware with it.
- Big blocks (where fitted): verify the radiator is the correct big-block unit; a small-block radiator doing its best is an overheating truck.
- Casting numbers and date codes: the casting date should precede the truck's build date by weeks, not follow it.

Transmissions and Transfer Cases

Unit	Type	Application
3-speed manual	Column-shift	Base, light-duty
4-speed manual (NP435)	Floor-shift, granny low	Heavy-duty / 4WD favorite
TorqueFlite 727	3-speed automatic	Optional across the line

W100 four-wheel drive runs a part-time transfer case with locking hubs in this era of the line; the full-time case becomes standard on 4WD models for 1975. Whatever the case, the restoration rule is the same: seals, chain or gears, and shift linkage are wear items - budget them.