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1972 Dodge Demon 340 Restoration Guide

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RESTORATIONESSENTIALS

1972 Dodge Demon 340

Factory-Correct Restoration Guide

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About This Guide

This is the RestorationEssentials factory-correct restoration guide for the 1972 Dodge Demon 340 — one model, one year, nothing else. Every specification in this guide was checked against marque references, factory literature excerpts, and enthusiast documentation before it was written.

Our operating ethic is simple: we don't lie and we don't steal, we offer value. That means three things for this guide. First, no invented specifications — every number has a source. Second, where reputable sources disagree, the disagreement is disclosed in the text and in the Sources, Conflicts & Omissions section rather than papered over. Third, where a detail could not be verified, it is omitted and the omission is recorded — an honest gap beats a confident fabrication.

How to use this guide: start with the VIN and fender-tag (or door data plate) decoding sections to establish exactly what your car was when it left the factory. Use the engine, transmission, axle, paint, and casting sections to verify that what is on the car today matches what should be there. Use the rust and restoration-sequence sections to plan the work. And keep this guide in the shop — it is a working document, not a coffee-table book.

A final note: these cars are sixty years old. Parts have been swapped, tags have been lost, and memories have faded. Trust

the metal — casting numbers, date codes, and stampings — over stories. When in doubt, photograph everything and verify against the factory service manual for your year.

1. Manufacturer History: Dodge

Dodge began in 1900 as the Dodge Brothers Machine Shop, supplying parts — and then complete cars — with a reputation for overbuilt durability. The first Dodge Brothers automobile appeared in 1914, and the brothers' obsession with quality made 'Dependability' the brand's watchword. After both brothers died in 1920, the company was sold to Chrysler in 1928, becoming the corporation's mainstream, slightly sportier division.

Dodge found its performance voice in the 1950s with the Red Ram Hemi V8 and Exner's Forward Look styling, then doubled down in the 1960s: the 1966 Charger invented the fastback muscle car, the Coronet put big-block power in a mid-size package, and the 1968 Super Bee answered Plymouth's Road Runner with Dodge's own budget brawler. The 1969 Charger Daytona and its Plymouth Superbird sibling took the aero wars to NASCAR's fastest tracks.

Like Plymouth, Dodge benefited from Chrysler's deep engineering bench: the LA small-block, B/RB big-block, and 426 Hemi engines; the A833 four-speed and TorqueFlite automatics; the 8-3/4-inch and Dana 60 rear axles; and torsion-bar front suspension that made Mopars handle. Dodge's muscle cars were typically a half-step more upscale than their Plymouth twins, which is why survivors in factory-correct condition are so prized today.

The muscle era ended with the 1971 model year for high compression, and Dodge pivoted to personal luxury (Charger), compacts (Dart, Colt), and eventually the minivan. But the 1967-1971 B-body 1972 Dodge Demon 340

performance cars — Coronet R/T, Super Bee, and Charger R/T — are cornerstone collector cars, and their restoration is supported by factory documentation, Galen Govier's decoding references, and a mature reproduction market.

2. Model History: Dodge Demon 340

The Dodge Demon arrived for 1971 as Dodge's version of the Plymouth Duster — a fastback coupe on the



platform, but with Dodge's own front-end styling, its own attitude, and a name that proved controversial from day one. (Religious groups objected to the 'Demon' name and its little pitchfork-wielding mascot; Dodge would rename the car 'Dart Sport' for 1973.)

The Demon 340 was the performance version: the 340 V8 (275 hp) standard, floor-shifted A230 three-speed manual, Rallye suspension, power front disc brakes, dual exhaust with chrome tips, 3.23 rear axle, and E70-14 tires. It was the same winning formula as the Duster 340 — big small-block in a light body — with Dodge styling and the most outrageous name in the business.

For 1971 the Demon 340 was an instant credibility machine: Motor Trend tested a four-speed, 3.91-geared car at 14.49 seconds at 98.28 mph in the quarter mile — genuine muscle-car performance from a compact. At 10,098 cars, the 1971 Demon 340 was the model's best year — it established the Demon's reputation overnight.

For 1972 the Demon 340 continued at 240 net horsepower with revised grille, parking lamps, side markers, and badging, a single hood scoop replacing the 1971's outboard twins, and — per a technical-service-bulletin report in Hemmings — a change from forged to cast crankshaft beginning in April 1972, requiring external-balancing components. The 3.91 axle option was retired.

The Demon's two-year run under the Demon name (1971-1972) makes it one of the shortest-lived muscle-car nameplates — and the controversy only adds to the story. The 1971 cars are the full-strength originals; the 1972 cars are the net-rated, single-scoop evolution. Both are pure A-body Mopar underneath, with all the restoration advantages that brings.

3. What Makes the 1972 Unique

The 1972 Demon 340 is the second and final year of the Demon name — and a car defined by transitions. The 340 was re-rated at 240 net horsepower (same engine, new measuring stick, exactly as with the 1972 Duster 340). The grille, parking lamps, side markers, and badging were revised. The 1971's outboard twin hood scoops gave way to a single hood scoop. And the 3.91 axle option was retired.

The most technically significant 1972 change is invisible: per a technical-service-bulletin report in Hemmings, the 340's forged crankshaft was replaced by a cast crankshaft beginning in April 1972, requiring external-balancing components (harmonic balancer and torque converter/flywheel). For the restorer, this means the balancing components must match the crankshaft — a forged-crank balancer on a cast-crank engine (or vice versa) is incorrect and potentially destructive.

1972 Dodge Demon 340

Production for 1972 is genuinely disputed, and this guide reports the dispute openly: one source reports 10,223 Demon 340s, another reports approximately 8,700, and Hemmings says 'just over 10,000' were built. Total Demon production (all engines) is likewise reported as both 40,000 and 48,500. Do not state a precise 1972 figure as fact without stronger confirmation — this guide does not.

The 1972 Demon 340's significance: it is the last Demon — the name became 'Dart Sport' for 1973 — and the net-rated bookend to the 1971's gross-rated original. The single scoop, revised trim, and cast crank (from April) are the technical fingerprints of the year.

Restoration notes specific to 1972: the single hood scoop is the 1972 identifier — twin scoops mean 1971 parts. Verify the crankshaft type against the build date (forged through March 1972, cast from April) and match the balancing components accordingly. The 240-net rating is correct — do not 'correct' it to 275. Emblems replaced decals in several applications for 1972 — verify the details against 1972 references. Year-to-year changes at a glance.

- 340 re-rated at 240 net horsepower (same engine, new measuring stick).
- Single hood scoop replaced the 1971's outboard twins.
- Revised grille, parking lamps, side markers, and badging.