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The opening pages of

1969 Dodge Super Bee Restoration Guide

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1969 Dodge Super Bee

Factory-Correct Restoration Guide

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About This Guide

This is the RestorationEssentials factory-correct restoration guide for the 1969 Dodge Super Bee — 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 1969 Dodge Super Bee

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 Super Bee

The Dodge Super Bee was born in 1968 as Dodge's answer to the Plymouth Road Runner: a no-frills,



...e, low-price muscle car built on the mid-size Coronet platform. The formula was the Road Runner — take the cheapest two-door body, install the biggest standard engine in the class, add heavy-duty running gear, and skip the luxury — but the execution was pure Dodge, right down to the name, borrowed from the B-body platform itself — the 'Bee' was the B-body, and the Super Bee was the super B-body, complete with a cartoon bee mascot in a racing helmet.)

The 1968 Super Bee came only as a pillared coupe with the 383 Magnum (335 hp) standard and the 426 Hemi optional — the most powerful standard engine in the budget-muscle class. A hardtop joined for 1969, and the lineup exploded: the 383 Magnum continued, the Hemi continued, and in the spring of 1969 the A12 option brought the 440 Six Pack (390 hp) — three Holley two-barrels on an Edelbrock aluminum intake, a lift-off fiberglass hood with a functional scoop, and heavy-duty everything. The A12 Super Bee is one of the great street machines of the era.

For 1970 the Super Bee got the Coronet's dramatic new 'loop bumper' styling and continued with the 383 Magnum standard, the 440 Six Pack, and the Hemi. For 1971 the Super Bee moved to the Charger platform (the Coronet became a four-door-only line in spirit), with the 383 Magnum standard, the 340 small-block as a new option, and the 440 Six Pack and Hemi continuing in tiny numbers. The 1971 cars are the rarest Super Bees: just 5,054 built, including 22 Hemis.

The Super Bee's four-year run (1968-1971) makes it one of the most focused muscle-car nameplates ever: every year a B-body, every year big-block power standard, every year aimed at the buyer who wanted maximum performance per dollar. The 1969 A12 cars and the 1971 Hemi cars are the blue chips; the 383 cars are the accessible entry into one of the hobby's most charismatic nameplates.

For the restorer, the Super Bee is pure B-body Mopar: the 383/440/Hemi engine families, A833 four-speed and TorqueFlite automatics, 8-3/4-inch and Dana 60 rear axles, and torsion-bar front suspension. Parts interchange across the Coronet/Charger B-body lines, reproduction support is deep, and the fender tag and VIN decode cleanly — WM21/WM23 for 1968-1970 (W = Coronet, M = Super Bee price class), WH23 for 1971 (Charger-based).

3. What Makes the 1969 Unique

The 1969 Super Bee is the best-selling year (27,800 cars) and the year of the A12 — the 440 Six Pack option that arrived in the spring of 1969 and instantly became legend. The A12 package: the 440 V8 with three Holley two-barrels (390 hp), an Edelbrock aluminum intake, a lift-off fiberglass hood with a functional scoop, heavy-duty suspension and brakes, and delete-everything purposefulness. The A12 Super Bee 1969 Dodge Super Bee

(and its Plymouth Road Runner twin) is one of the great street machines of the muscle era.

The hardtop body (WM23) joined the pillared coupe (WM21) for 1969, doubling the line's appeal. The 383 Magnum (335 hp) continued as the standard engine, the 426 Hemi continued as the exotic option, and the A12's 440 Six Pack slotted between them as the street-racer's choice — nearly Hemi performance without the Hemi price or temperament.

VIN coding for 1969: WM21/WM23 for the body, with the engine code in position five — H = 383 Magnum, V = 440 Six Pack (A12), J = 426 Hemi. The V-code is the one that matters: A12 cars are among the most cloned Mopars in the hobby, and the fender tag, broadcast sheet, and VIN must all agree.

A note on 1969 Hemi production, stated honestly: one secondary source reports 166 Hemi Super Bees for 1969, while Hemmings breaks out 166 coupes plus 92 hardtops (258 total). This guide reports both figures with their scopes rather than choosing — verify against Galen Govier's records or factory documentation before stating a total as fact.

1969 visual identifiers: the revised grille and trim, rectangular side marker lights (1968 used round), and the A12's unmistakable lift-off hood with its scoop. The 1969 cars also got the usual federal safety updates