

FREE SAMPLE

The opening pages of

1971 Dodge Super Bee Restoration Guide

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RESTORATIONESSENTIALS

1971 Dodge Super Bee

Factory-Correct Restoration Guide

Key facts at a glance

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Single-year coverage. Factory-correct specifications. No guesswork.

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About This Guide

This is the RestorationEssentials factory-correct restoration guide for the 1971 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 1971 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
... — 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 1971 Unique

The 1971 Super Bee is the end of the line — and the rarest Super Bee ever built at 5,054 cars. The big
change: the Super Bee moved from the Coronet to the Charger platform (the Coronet coupe bodies were
discontinued), so the 1971 Super Bee is a Charger-based car (WH23) with Super Bee trim and attitude. It
is the only Charger-based Super Bee.

1971 Dodge Super Bee

The engine lineup was the broadest in Super Bee history: the 383 Magnum (300 hp) standard, the 340
small-block (275 hp) as a new lightweight option, the 440 four-barrel, the 440 Six Pack (390 hp), and the
426 Hemi (425 hp). Reported production by engine: 3,858 with the standard 383, 307 with the 340, 99 with
the 440 Six Pack, 26 with the 440 four-barrel, and 22 with the Hemi. (One article misattributes these
figures to Plymouth — they are Dodge Super Bee figures; this guide attributes them correctly.)

The 1971 model year was the last for high compression, and the Super Bee's 1971 ratings reflect the
industry's retreat: the 383 dropped from 335 to 300 hp. The 1971 cars are also the only Super Bees with
the fuselage Charger's styling — full-width grille, available hidden headlights, and the
long-hood/short-deck proportions — a completely different look from the 1968-1970 Coronet-based cars.
1971 VIN coding: WH23 (Charger-based Super Bee) with the engine code in position five — N = 383, H =
340, U = 440-4V, V = 440 Six Pack, R = 426 Hemi. The H-code 340 cars (307 built) are the interesting
sleepers of the year — the lightest Super Bees ever built.

Production of 5,054 makes every 1971 Super Bee rare; the 22 Hemi cars and 99 Six Pack cars are
blue-chip. The 1971 Super Bee's one-year-only status — one year on the Charger platform, one year with