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1964 Ford Galaxie Restoration Guide

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1964 Ford Galaxie

Factory-Correct Restoration Guide

Key facts at a glance

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About This Guide

This is the RestorationEssentials factory-correct restoration guide for the 1964 Ford Galaxie Restoration Guide — 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 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, plates 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: Ford

Ford Motor Company was incorporated in 1903 by Henry Ford and a group of Detroit investors. The 1908 Model T put the world on wheels — more than 15 million built — and the moving assembly line at Highland Park (1913) redefined manufacturing itself. The 1927 Model A and the 1932 flathead V8, the first affordable V8 in an inexpensive car, cemented Ford's place in the American garage and created a performance culture around the brand that never left.

After World War II, Ford modernized under Henry Ford II and the 'Whiz Kids.' The 1949 Ford saved the company; the 1955 Thunderbird created the personal-luxury segment; and the 1959 Galaxie — named for the Space Race — gave Ford's top full-size trim a name of its own. By the early 1960s Ford was all-in on 'Total Performance': the 1963½ Galaxie fastback shaped in a wind tunnel for NASCAR, the 427-powered factory lightweight Galaxies, and the 1964½ Mustang that changed the industry overnight.

The full-size Ford was the company's foundation through all of it — the car Ford dealers lived on. For 1965 Ford gave its big cars a full-perimeter frame, coil-spring suspension at all four corners, and the quiet, solid road manners that made the 1965-1968 generation the best-selling big Fords ever built. The 1966 Galaxie 500 7-Litre and the 1967 facelift carried the performance torch; the 1968 restyle, the 1969 redesign, and the 1971 redesign kept the full-size line current through the end of the muscle era.

For the restorer, Ford's scale is both blessing and curse. Mechanical parts were made by the million, so FE and 385-series engine components, Toploader and C6 transmissions, and 9-inch rear-axle parts are 1964 Ford Galaxie

easy to find — but year-specific trim and sheet metal were made for one model year, and the difference between a 1967 and a 1968 fender is the difference between a correct car and an expensive mistake. The door data plate decodes the car's born-with configuration, and for 1967-and-later cars the Marti Report (built from Ford's production database) confirms it.



Model History: Ford Galaxie

Ford named its top full-size trim for the Space Race: the Galaxie debuted for 1959 as the flagship trim of the Fairlane 500, and the name stuck. The mid-1963 Sports Hardtop fastback — developed in the wind tunnel and homologated for NASCAR — turned the Galaxie into a superspeedway weapon, especially paired with the 410/425-horsepower 427.

For 1964 the Galaxie got a new body on the proven chassis and the 289 small-block joined the lineup. Then came the clean-sheet 1965 redesign: new body, full-perimeter frame, and the debut of the Galaxie 500 LTD — the affordable personal-luxury flagship that invented its segment. The 1966 Galaxie 500 7-Litre paired the new 428 V8 (345 horsepower, 462 lb-ft) with buckets, console, and badging for Ford's factory answer to the personal-luxury performance car; 1967 brought a facelift and federally mandated safety equipment.

3. What Makes the 1964 Unique

1964 brought a new body shell to the full-size Ford: crisper sheet metal on the same 119-inch wheelbase chassis, with the Sports Hardtop fastback now a full-year body after its mid-1963 introduction.

The 289 small-block joined the full-size lineup for 1964 — a 195-horsepower 2-barrel and a 210-horsepower 4-barrel — giving buyers a modern lightweight V8 between the 223 six and the FE big-blocks.

The 223 inline-six reached the end of its full-size Ford career in 1964; the 240 big-six replaced it for 1965. A 1964 six-cylinder car is a legitimate configuration but the last of its line.

The 427 continued as the homologation hero: 410-horsepower single four-barrel and 425-horsepower dual-quad, still four-speed-only, still requiring VIN and casting verification.

1964 was the last year before the 1965 redesign's full-perimeter frame — the X-frame cars have their own structural inspection points, and the 1965-up suspension and chassis parts do not transfer.

Restoration notes: the 1964-only grille, trim, and tail panel fit nothing else — verify every bright part before assuming interchange. The 289 4V cars are often cloned from 2-barrel cars; the VIN engine code and the intake casting decide. Check the X-frame's center section and the body mounts before committing to a project car.

The XL continued as the bucket-seat flagship for 1964, and the Sports Hardtop fastback — now a full-year body — gave the XL line its most aerodynamic shape. XL trim codes, bucket seats, and console are 1964 Ford Galaxie

frequently missing or incorrect on project cars; the TRIM code on the warranty plate is the authority.

The 289's arrival in the full-size line for 1964 is a running-change story: early 1964 cars may carry different small-block details than late cars, so the build DATE matters when judging 289-specific hardware. The 4-barrel Challenger cars are the ones most often cloned — verify the VIN engine code, not just the intake. The 1964 model range walked from the Custom through the Galaxie 500 to the XL, with wagons alongside — and the 1964-only sheet metal means every body panel, every piece of brightwork, and the grille and tail panel are single-year parts. When buying a project car, inventory the trim first: a straight, complete 1964 is worth a substantial premium over a trim-stripped one, because the parts to complete it are one-year-only and priced accordingly.

Year-to-year changes at a glance.

■ New body shell on the carryover 119-inch X-frame chassis; Sports Hardtop fastback becomes a full-year body. 1964-only grille, trim, and tail panel.

■ 289 small-block joins the full-size line (195-hp 2V, 210-hp 4V); 223 six in its final year; 352, 390, and the 410/425-hp 427 carry on. Last year of the X-frame.