

FREE SAMPLE

The opening pages of

1966 Ford Mustang Restoration Guide

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RESTORATION ESSENTIALS

1966 Ford Mustang Restoration Guide

1966 Model Year — Hardtop • Fastback • Convertible

Factory-correct data for the hands-on restorer: VIN and warranty-plate decoding, engine and driveline specifications, paint and trim codes, production figures, casting numbers, torque values, and a step-by-step restoration sequence — all specific to the 1966 Mustang.

Key Specifications at a Glance

Total production	607,568 — the highest single-year Mustang total ever
Body styles	Hardtop (65A/B/C), Fastback (63A/B), Convertible (76A/B/C)
Engine lineup	200 six; 289 V8 in 200-hp C-code, 225-hp A-code, 271-hp K-code HiPo
A-code correction	The A-code 289 is rated 225 hp — not 200 hp as some listings claim
GT Equipment Group	Optional performance package (introduced for 1965, continued for 1966)
Assembly plants	Dearborn, Michigan • Metuchen, New Jersey • San Jose, California

Restoration work involves fuel systems, high-voltage ignition, and several thousand pounds of steel overhead. Disconnect the battery before electrical work, support the car on rated jack stands (never a jack alone), and keep a fire extinguisher within reach when fuel or welding is involved.

Inside This Guide

1. Ford Motor Company: The Manufacturer Behind the Mustang
2. The Mustang Model Line: 1964½ to 1966
3. What Makes the 1966 Mustang Unique
4. Decoding the 1966 VIN
5. The Warranty Plate: Body, Paint, Trim, Date, DSO, Axle, and Transmission
6. 1966 Engines: Specifications and Identification
7. Transmissions
8. Rear Axles
9. Suspension, Steering, Brakes, Wheels, and Tires
10. 1966 Paint and Interior Trim Codes
11. 1966 Production Numbers
12. Casting Numbers and Date Codes
13. Fastener Torque Reference
14. Rust-Prone Areas and 1966-Specific Cautions
15. Restoration Sequence
16. Options and Packages
17. Fuel, Cooling, Electrical, and Exhaust Systems
18. Interior, Glass, and Weatherstrip
19. Pre-Purchase Inspection Checklist
20. Quick-Reference Decoder
21. Engine Rebuild Notes
22. Bodywork and Paint Process
23. First Start, Break-In, and Shakedown
24. Heater, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning
25. Sources Consulted

How to use this guide. Chapters 1 and 2 give you the history that drives collector value. Chapter 3 explains exactly what makes this variant different from every other Mustang of its year. The technical chapters are written to be used at the car: decoding tags, checking castings, and planning the restoration in the right order. Keep a notebook with this guide and verify every number against the car in front of you.

1. Ford Motor Company: The Manufacturer Behind the Mustang

Ford Motor Company entered the 1966 model year as the second-largest automaker in the world and the company that had, more than any other, invented the mass-market automobile. Founded on June 16, 1903, by Henry Ford and a group of Detroit investors, Ford put America on wheels with the Model T (1908–1927, more than 15 million built) and then proved it could do it again with the Model A (1927–1931) and the first affordable V8 in 1932 — the flathead that made Ford the performance choice of a generation of hot-rodders.

After World War II, Ford rebuilt itself into a full-line manufacturer. The 1949 Ford saved the company with modern slab-side styling; the 1955 Thunderbird gave Ford a personal-luxury halo car; and the 1960 Falcon proved Ford could sell a compact in volume. Through the early 1960s, under the leadership of Henry Ford II and executives like Robert McNamara and later Lee Iacocca, Ford pursued what it called Total Performance — racing programs, high-performance street engines, and a product line aimed squarely at younger buyers with disposable income. The Mustang was the purest expression of that strategy, and 1966 was the year it paid off at a scale no one had predicted.

Understanding Ford's position in 1966 matters to the restorer because it explains the car's engineering. Ford built the Mustang from the Falcon/Comet compact parts bin on purpose: shared suspension, shared drivetrains, and shared assembly plants kept costs down and interchangeability up. That is why a 1966 Mustang is one of the most supportable collector cars in existence — the mechanical parts were produced by the millions, the aftermarket never walked away, and factory documentation is deep. When you restore a 1966 Mustang, you are working on the highest-volume classic Ford of the decade, and the parts and knowledge base reflect it.

Ford's racing programs in 1966 were at full cry. The GT40 had just begun its Le Mans assault, NASCAR teams were running Ford's big-block stock cars, and drag strips across America were full of dealer-built and factory-supported Fords. That racing halo washed directly over the Mustang: the GT Equipment Group, the K-code High Performance 289, and the Shelby GT350 — built by Carroll Shelby's operation from 1965–66 fastbacks — gave showroom buyers a genuine connection to the track. When you see K-code or GT badging on a 1966, you are looking at the street end of Ford's Total Performance pipeline.

Corporate Ford in 1966 was run by Henry Ford II with Lee Iacocca rising fast — the executive who had championed the Mustang and would soon run the company. The Mustang's success gave Ford enormous confidence to invest: new plants, new engines, and the big-block program that would reach the Mustang itself in 1967. A 1966 Mustang is therefore a snapshot of Ford at its most self-assured — the biggest-selling year of the nameplate, built by a company that believed the good times would never end.