

FREE SAMPLE

The opening pages of

1979-1993 Fox Body Mustang 2.3T SVO Special Performance Restoration Guide

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so you can judge the depth before you spend a dollar.

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RESTORATION ESSENTIALS

Fox-Body Mustang 1979–1993

2.3T, SVO & Special-Performance Variants

SVO, Turbo GT, GT350, SSP & Cobra — the special-Fox file

Platform guide · Model years 1979–1993

KEY FACTS AT A GLANCE

- The Mustang SVO (1984–1986) is the thinking person's Fox: a turbocharged, intercooled 2.3L four in a handling-first chassis. Only 9,844 were built.
- SVO output: 175 hp (1984–early 1985), 205 hp (mid-1985 "1985½"), 200 hp (1986) — from 14–15 psi of Garrett T03 boost.
- The 1983–84 Turbo GT's 2.3L turbo made 145 hp and 180 lb-ft — the warm-up act for the SVO.
- SVO VIN check: body code P28 with engine code T (1FABP28T...). No T, no SVO.
- The 1984½ GT350 marked the Mustang's 20th anniversary — about 5,260 built, all with GT350 decals and Canyon Red interiors.
- The SSP (Special Service Package) put 5.0 notchbacks into police service from 1982 to 1993.
- The 1993 SVT Cobra closed the Fox era: 235 hp, GT40 heads, 4,993 built — plus 107 stripped Cobra Rs.
- Special cars carry special premiums. Every car in this guide is faked more often than the volume 5.0s — verify before you pay.

Why the specials matter

The volume 5.0 guide covers the cars most people own. This guide covers the cars people argue about: the turbocharged SVO that tried to out-handle Europe, the anniversary GT350, the police-package notchbacks, and the SVT Cobra that sent the Fox platform out at the top of its game. Production numbers are small, documentation is thinner, and clones are everywhere — a regular LX 5.0 with SVO badges is a \$6,000 styling exercise wearing a \$25,000 identity. The identity checks in this guide are the whole point.

The 2.3L Turbo GT, 1983–1984 — STOCK-CORRECT

Before the SVO, there was the Turbo GT: the regular Mustang GT with the turbocharged 2.3L Lima four instead of the 5.0. Rated at 145 hp and 180 lb-ft, it was quicker than the 4.2L V8 cars it replaced in spirit but no threat to the 5.0 GT — and that's exactly why it's interesting now. The Turbo GT was the test bed: turbocharging, EEC-IV fuel injection, and the idea that a four-cylinder Mustang could be a performance car.

Identification: VIN engine code T, GT trim and badging, functional hood scoop (on some), and the turbo-specific underhood layout — intercooler plumbing on later cars, the AiResearch turbo on the driver's side of the engine. Production was modest and records are thin; buy on condition and documentation, not on rarity claims you can't verify. Mechanically, the Turbo GT shares its bottom end with every 1980s Ford 2.3L — parts availability is a non-issue, which is more than you can say for some cars in this guide.

Mustang SVO, 1984–1986 — STOCK-CORRECT

Ford's Special Vehicle Operations — the skunkworks founded in 1980 to get Ford back into motorsports — looked at the Mustang GT and decided the answer wasn't a bigger V8. It was a lighter, better-balanced car: a detuned version of the turbocharged 2.3L Lima four from the IMSA Mustang GTP program, set back in the chassis for weight distribution, with a suspension developed for handling rather than straight-line heroics. The 2.3T was about 150 pounds lighter than the 5.0. The target wasn't the Camaro — it was entry-level European sports cars.

Specifications by year

Year	Power	Torque	Boost	Production
1984	175 hp @ 4,400	210 lb-ft @ 3,000	14 psi	4,508
1985 (early)	175 hp @ 4,400	210 lb-ft @ 3,000	14 psi	1,954 (full year)
1985½	205 hp @ 5,000	248 lb-ft @ 3,200	15 psi	~439
1986	200 hp @ 5,000	240 lb-ft @ 3,200	15 psi	3,382

Total production: 9,844. The 1985½ cars — built from mid-1985 — got the revised intake, a new T03 impeller for quicker spool-up, 35 lb/hr injectors, updated EEC-IV calibration, a new exhaust, the bi-plane rear spoiler, flush "aero" headlights (designed for 1984 but held by regulations), revised T-5 gearing, and the 3.73 rear axle. The 1985½ is essentially the car SVO wanted to build from the start; 1986 was a mild detune and carryover.

The SVO package

Garrett AiResearch T03 turbocharger, air-to-air intercooler fed by the functional hood scoop, EEC-IV electronic fuel injection, and a dash-mounted fuel-grade switch letting the driver match the tune to premium or regular fuel. Factory Hurst shifter on the Borg-Warner T-5. Koni adjustable shocks. Four-wheel disc brakes — rare on a Fox. Unique 16-inch aluminum wheels. SVO-specific front control arms for revised geometry (a persistent myth says they're Lincoln Mark VII arms — they aren't; they're SVO-specific). The 1985½-up cars added the bi-plane rear wing that defines the SVO silhouette.

Identifying a real SVO

1. **VIN:** 1FABP28T... — P28 is the SVO hatchback body code, T is the 2.3L turbo. Year code E (1984), F (1985), or G (1986). A "T" engine code in a P42/P41 body is not an SVO.
2. **Buck tag and door label** must agree with the VIN on body, engine, and sequence number.
3. **SVO-only hardware:** the intercooler and hood scoop, Koni shocks, four-wheel discs, Hurst shifter, 16-inch SVO wheels, bi-plane spoiler (1985½-up), and the SVO front fascia with its distinctive lower intake. A GT with SVO badges has none of this underneath.
4. **1986-only:** flush aero headlights from the factory; 1984–early-1985 cars had sealed beams.

SVO restoration notes — STOCK-CORRECT

The SVO's problem is also its charm: low production means thin reproduction support. Interior trim, SVO-specific spoilers, and the correct 16-inch wheels are hunt-on-eBay-Motors items, not catalog items. The mechanicals are the easy part — the bottom end is a standard 1980s Ford 2.3L, and the T03 turbo was used across Ford's turbo lineup. Buy the most complete, most original SVO you can find; every missing SVO-specific part is a months-long search. Known weak points: the timing belt (it's a non-interference engine — a broken belt strands you but doesn't bend valves, so change it on schedule without fear), exhaust-seat cracking in heads on overheated cars (repairable with seat inserts, or replacement iron/aluminum heads are available), and turbo lag, which no restoration cures — it's the car's character.

GT350 20th Anniversary, 1984½ — STOCK-CORRECT

For the Mustang's 20th anniversary, Ford released the GT350 package mid-1984: Oxford White paint, Canyon Red interior, and GT350 decals on the hood and fenders, available on the hatchback, notchback, and convertible with the 5.0 or the 2.3T. About 5,260 were built (published figure). It was an appearance and trim package — the drivetrain was standard GT/LX fare — which makes it both easy to fake and easy to verify: the door label paint code, the buck tag, and the original build configuration are the evidence. A GT350 with the wrong interior color or a repaint in anything but Oxford White needs paperwork to support the story.

SSP Special Service Package, 1982–1993 — STOCK-CORRECT

The Special Service Package was Ford's police/fleet Mustang: LX notchback 5.0s (the lightest, stiffest body) with certified-calibration speedometers (140/160 mph), an engine oil cooler, silicone radiator hoses, reinforced floor pans, single-key locking, and deleted power options. Highway patrols — the California Highway Patrol most famously — ran them as pursuit cars. SSP cars were sold new only to fleets, but they enter the civilian market as used police vehicles, and survivors with documentation are collectible.

Identification: LX notchback body, 5.0 HO (VIN E, 1987-up), buck tag and door label showing the SSP order, plus the police-specific hardware: certified speedometer, oil cooler, and the reinforced details. Beware the "ex-police" story on a car with none of the hardware — fleets also bought plain LX 5.0s, and sellers conflate them.