

Automotive Restoration Master Checklist v2

Universal restoration reference - 13 phases, 250+ tasks - Free sample (first 4 pages)

Slug: automotive-restoration-master-checklist
Product: Automotive Restoration Master Checklist v2 (standalone, marque-agnostic)
New in v2: Line-item: Done / Task / Notes / Status+Date. Cross-references to /guides/<slug>.
Pages in this preview: 4 pages (cover, How to Use, Concours rules, Phase 1 start)
Total pages (full product): 16+ pages across 13 restoration phases (250+ tasks)
Source: Free preview sample - restorationessentials.com
Vehicle: _____
Model Year: _____
VIN: _____
Restoration Start Date: _____
Target Show: _____
Restorer / Shop: _____
Phone: _____

Description	Qty	Unit	Amount
[] 01. Photograph every panel in place (front / side / rear / roof / under-dash / engine bay / trunk / underneath).. STATUS: ____ DATE: ____ NOTES: ____	1	\$0.00	\$0.00
[] 02. Record VIN, body tag, trim tag, fender tag, partial-VIN dash stamp, and partial-VIN block stamp.. STATUS: ____ DATE: ____ NOTES: ____	1	\$0.00	\$0.00
[] 03. Obtain Marti Report or Broadcast Sheet if applicable (Ford / FoMoCo / Lincoln / Mercury; Plymouth / Dodge / Chrysler).. STATUS: ____ DATE: ____ NOTES: ____	1	\$0.00	\$0.00
[] 04. Obtain GM Trim Tag decode if applicable (Chevrolet / Pontiac / Buick / Oldsmobile / Cadillac).. STATUS: ____ DATE: ____ NOTES: ____	1	\$0.00	\$0.00
[] 05. Obtain SAAC paperwork if applicable (Shelby-American cars).. STATUS: ____ DATE: ____ NOTES: ____	1	\$0.00	\$0.00
[] 06. Obtain Studebaker National Museum authentication if applicable (Studebaker / Avanti / Hawk).. STATUS: ____ DATE: ____ NOTES: ____	1	\$0.00	\$0.00
[] 07. Obtain AMCRC roster + CarTech SA318 + amclives.com cross-reference if applicable (AMC).. STATUS: ____ DATE: ____ NOTES: ____	1	\$0.00	\$0.00
[] 08. Document every option code on the build sheet (RPO / R-code / DSO / axle / transmission / engine).. STATUS: ____ DATE: ____ NOTES: ____	1	\$0.00	\$0.00
[] 09. Photograph all original-date-coded parts (engine block casting date / heads / intake / carb / distributor / radiator / hoses / belts).. STATUS: ____ DATE: ____ NOTES: ____	1	\$0.00	\$0.00

[] 10. Sketch a chassis-rails-and-crossmember map; mark the partial-VIN dash and block stamp locations.. STATUS: _____ DATE: _____ NOTES: _____	1	\$0.00	\$0.00
[] 11. Build a master fastener-bag log; number and date every bag; photograph contents pre-bagging.. STATUS: _____ DATE: _____ NOTES: _____	1	\$0.00	\$0.00
[] 12. Photograph the engine-bay wiring harness routing before ANY desolder or disconnect.. STATUS: _____ DATE: _____ NOTES: _____	1	\$0.00	\$0.00
[] 13. Photograph the dash harness routing before ANY under-dash removal.. STATUS: _____ DATE: _____ NOTES: _____	1	\$0.00	\$0.00
[] 14. Photograph the door-jamb wiring pass-through before ANY door removal.. STATUS: _____ DATE: _____ NOTES: _____	1	\$0.00	\$0.00
[] 15. Photograph the firewall bulkhead connector pin map before ANY bulkhead disconnect.. STATUS: _____ DATE: _____ NOTES: _____	1	\$0.00	\$0.00
[] 16. Photograph the rear-lighting harness from bumper to bumper before ANY tail-light removal.. STATUS: _____ DATE: _____ NOTES: _____	1	\$0.00	\$0.00
[] 17. Photograph the underbody harness routing; mark the frame-rail pass-throughs.. STATUS: _____ DATE: _____ NOTES: _____	1	\$0.00	\$0.00
[] 18. Photograph the heater-box and heater-core hose routing before ANY heater-box removal.. STATUS: _____ DATE: _____ NOTES: _____	1	\$0.00	\$0.00
[] 19. Photograph the A/C plumbing (compressor / condenser / evaporator / lines) before ANY A/C removal.. STATUS: _____ DATE: _____ NOTES: _____	1	\$0.00	\$0.00
[] 20. Photograph the radio antenna mount and the antenna cable routing before ANY antenna removal.. STATUS: _____ DATE: _____ NOTES: _____	1	\$0.00	\$0.00

HOW TO USE This checklist is the master reference for the entire build. Use one printed copy per phase, mark tasks as they complete, and file the finished phase with the receipt, the build sheet, the partial-VIN decode, and the Marti / Broadcast / Trim Tag paperwork. A blank status-code column reads as "Defer" by default -- update every code at the end of every work day so two restorers never read the same row differently.

V2 LINE-ITEM FORMAT (one row per task) DONE (checkbox) / TASK or INSPECTION POINT / NOTES or FINDINGS / STATUS + DATE. Fill Findings while the part is on the bench, not after reassembly.

STATUS CODE LEGEND (v2) C = Complete. IP = In Progress. PO = Part Ordered. DI = Diagnose. NA = N/A. D = Defer. R = Research.

CONCOURS-CRITICAL RULES (read every phase) Year-specific engine colors: confirm the block paint code from the manufacturer year-of-build (Buick / Chevrolet / Ford / Mopar / Pontiac / Olds all use year-specific paint codes; the year-only color chart is the discriminator). Date-code verification: every casting carries a date code; cross-reference the partial-VIN on the block / trim tag / cowl tag / fender tag / Marti Report / Broadcast Sheet to authenticate the original part.

Documentation requirements: keep a build sheet, a partial-VIN decode, a Marti Report or Broadcast Sheet, the trim-tag decode, and the cowl-tag decode on file for every part swap; a percentage-correct restoration cannot authenticate without the chain.

Numbers-matching chain: the chassis, the body, the engine, the transmission, and the rear axle should each carry the original partial VIN / serial number; deviations drop the validation

score. Hardware-grade spec: every fastener has a grade and a torque; record the fastener grade on a sticker or in the build sheet; mismatched hardware is a 10-point deduction per fastener on most concours judging sheets. Interior trim and material fidelity: original-style material weight, color, weave, and stitching pattern; reproduction material is a hard reject on most concours floors; keep samples of the original material on file. V2 CROSS-REFERENCES: when a task in this list is year/marque-specific, the v2 PDF row carries a hyperlink to the matching single-year guide product page (/guides/<slug>). Click through for the year-correct casting / part / fastener breakdown.