

## Bed Identification - Dodge Short Stepside Beds

We are frequently faced with the challenge of identifying and selling parts for the Dodge step side truck beds from the years of 1939-1985. This technical information addresses the interchangeability and identification of these Dodge step side truck beds and describes the significant features that changed as the designs changed over the years. This information is provided through research from various sources including our customers and is accurate to the best of our knowledge.



**1939-1947 SHORT BED Completely new bed design with wood floor.** Series: 1939 - TC, 1940 - VC, 1941-47 - WC.

1. First year for floor to be separate oak wood boards and bed strips. Six wood boards were separated by 5 bed strips. Previous floors before 1939 were corrugated steel.
2. Bed inside dimensions measured 48-1/4" x 78-1/8" with a height of 17" to the top of the bedside curl.
3. Besides are smooth and top is angled outward. Tailgate and front panels have an oval-shaped embossment. The tailgate has rectangular "DODGE" letters embossed in the center of the oval embossment. Tailgate height is 14-3/8".

**1948-1949 SHORT BED Completely new bed design with "cycle" style rear fender. This new bed design referred to as "high side".** Series: 1948-49 - B-1.

1. Bed floors constructed with six oak floorboards and five bed strips. Bed wood and strips do not interchange with the 1939-1947 series.
2. Bed inside dimensions measured 49" x 78-1/8" with a height of 22-1/2" to the top of the bedside curl. This bed was 5-1/2" deeper in height than the previous 1947 model.
3. Besides now have two horizontal ribs embossed into the skin for strength. These ribs are interrupted by the "cycle" style rear fender. Tops of besides are still angled outward.

4. Tailgate and front panels have new embossment shape, which remained until 1985 when the step beds were dropped from production. "DODGE" letters are embossed into center of tailgate. Tailgate and front panel now approximately 5-1/2" taller and 3/4" wider than 1939-1947 beds.

**1950-1952 SHORT BEDS** New "Low side" box introduced as standard box. "High side" box available as extra cost option. Series: 1950 - B-2, 1951-52 - B-3.

1. The "low side" pickup box similar to the one used on the 1939-1947 year trucks was introduced in 1950 as the standard equipment box. It measured 48-1/4" x 78-1/8" inside and had the smooth box sides. The "high side" box introduced in 1948 was an extra-cost option. A truck built in this year range could have either box installed. The "cycle" style fender was used on both boxes. This means that the "low side" box used from 1950-1952 will not interchange with the box from the 1939-1947 models.
2. This "low side" box used the same tailgate and front panel as the 1939-1947 models with the oval-shaped embossment with "DODGE" letters stamped into the tailgate in the center.
3. The "high side" box introduced in 1948 continued through 1952 without change.
4. Both the "high side" and "low side" boxes had six boards and five bed strips that fit the 1948-1952 series only.
5. All bedside tops are still angled outward.



**1953-1955 SHORT BEDS** Series: 1953 - B-4, 1954 - C-1, 1955 - C-1 & C-3.

1. New fender introduced. This fender would be used until the stepside beds were dropped from production in 1985.
2. Boxes are now 2" shorter than previous years at 76-1/8" inside length starting in 1953. This affects the bed wood, bed strips, and angle strips and bed sides.
3. New wood floor layout with seven bed strips and eight wood boards. Pine wood was now used instead of oak.
4. Bed strip and angle strip hole patterns changed slightly between 1954 and 1955.
5. Bed sides are still angled outward at

the top.

6. "Low side" and "high side" boxes are both available with the "low side" box standard equipment.
7. Tailgates and front panels for both boxes remain unchanged from 1950-1952.

**1956-1960 SHORT BEDS** Series: 1956 - C-3, 1957 - K, 1958 - L, 1959 - M, 1960 - P.

1. The "low side" box was dropped from availability in the spring of 1956. It is possible that a late production truck of 1955 could have been sold as a 1956 and could have a "low side" box.
2. Starting with new 1956 production trucks, all "high side" pickup box top rails are now flat and not angled as before.
3. Bed strip and wood patterns remain unchanged from 1955 through 1960. The box sheet metal remained unchanged from 1956 to 1960.
4. 1959 step bed models now called "Utiline".



**1961-1965 1<sup>st</sup> SERIES SHORT BEDS**  
**Dodge completely redesigned their truck line in mid year 1965.** *The trucks with the quad headlights are known as 1965 1<sup>st</sup> series and the trucks with the single headlights per side are known as 1965 2<sup>nd</sup> series.* Series: 1961 - R, 1962 - S, 1963 - T, 1964-65 1st - V.

1. Starting in 1961, all short bed boxes are now 54" x 76-1/8" inside dimension. This is 5" wider than short boxes built from 1960 and earlier. This new 54" wide box is the same width as most long bed boxes built from 1948 on. At this point all tailgates and front panels are made for the 54" wide box.
2. The tailgates now have a third hinge in the middle of the tailgate. The embossed shape and stamped letters did not change.
3. The wood and bed strip pattern changed to six bed strips and seven

boards in 1961 compared to the seven bed strip and eight board pattern from 1960.

4. The angle strips on the bed sides are now comprised of a six piece set. The angles are spot welded to the bed sides as before, but have to fit around a curved wheel well embossed into the bed sides. Previous angle strips were all straight on short beds and were one piece per side.

**1965 2<sup>nd</sup>-1971 SHORT BEDS Dodge completely redesigned their truck line in mid year 1965.** *The trucks with the quad headlights are known as 1965 1<sup>st</sup> series and the trucks with the single headlights per side are known as 1965 2<sup>nd</sup> series.* Series: 1965 2nd - A, 1966 - B, 1967 - C, 1968 - D, 1969 - E, 1970 - F, 1971 - G.

1. All box sheet metal remained unchanged.
2. Floor pattern remained unchanged except for the mounting of the box to the frame.



#### 1972 - 1985 SHORT BEDS

1. Tailgates no longer have "DODGE" letters stamped into center area.
2. All other sheet metal remained unchanged except for the placement of the driver's side rear fender. When the gas tank was removed from the cab in 1975 or 1976 and placed under the bed on this side, the fender was repositioned slightly rearward approximately one inch.
3. Bed strips and angles remain unchanged from previous years of 1965-1971.
4. Bed-to-frame mounting hardware and pattern changed in 1972.
5. This series includes the popular Li'l Red Express from 1978-1979 and the Warlock.

**Other Notes:**

1. D-100s are 2-wheel drive trucks; W-100s are 4-wheel drives.
2. Many people think of Dodge Power Wagons as the big, long military style trucks. However, from 1957 - mid-eighties, Dodge called their 4-wheel drive trucks "Power Wagons".
3. **See more pictures of Dodge trucks in our Dodge Truck Gallery.**