

## Bed Side Interchangeability - GM Short Stepside Beds

We are frequently asked questions relating to fitting a bed or bed part from one year/model truck to a different year/model than that for which it was designed. Often the caller may have access to a used bed that is similar to one he needs and he wants to know if it will fit his truck. This tech information will address the interchangeability of GM short bed stepside pickup bed parts from 1954 through 1987. We will describe the significant features that changed as the designs changed over the years.

1954 is the first year for bed sides with horizontal top flare surfaces. Previous years were angled. The bed side height is increased from previous models and stake pocket shape also changed. Front bed panel has a rectangular embossed pattern extending nearly the full width of the bed. Inside width of the bed area is 50", unchanged from previous models. Those features remained unchanged from 1954 through the 1987 model GM Stepsides. The following are some of the features of the various year series GM Stepside beds.



### 1954 - 1955 (first series) Short Bed

1. An embossed pattern stamped in the bed side sheet metal follows the shape of the fender outline where the fender attaches to the bed sides.
2. Fenders have a rounded shape and are the same as those used in the 47-53 model years.
3. Rear sill mounting brackets are about 4" long and 2 1/8" tall, 44 1/4" apart.
4. There are three cross sills and they are about 2 1/8" tall, a little taller than previous years. Also, beginning with the 54 year GM no longer used the wooden bed-to-frame bed mounting blocks.
5. Seven bed strips and eight boards, the same board widths as previous 51-53 model GM beds. Board length and bed strip length is 77 1/8", slightly longer than previous models.
6. GMC and Chevrolet both had new design tailgates for this year. Tailgate is embossed with large rectangular pattern similar to the front bed panel and "Chevrolet" or GMC is embossed in the center area.



### 1955 (second series) - 1959 Short Bed

1. Bed side sheet metal is the same dimension as previous series, but the embossed pattern is changed to three ribs about 1" wide instead of the previous pattern following the shape of the fenders. This pattern of three ribs remained unchanged through the 1987 model.
2. The fender design changed to the more squared design that was unchanged from 1955 through 1966.
3. Rear sill mounting brackets are about 3" long and 2 1/8" tall, 31 3/4" apart.
4. There are three cross sills, and the third from the front is different than the other two. The third cross sill has its lower edges formed upward at the outer ends of the cross sill.
5. Seven bed strips and eight boards, the same dimensions as the 1954-1955 first series. The bed-to-frame hole locations however are changed, making the bed wood not interchangeable with the 1954-1955 first series.
6. Bed strips and angle strips have the same bolt pattern as 1954-1955 first series so they are interchangeable.
7. Chevrolet tailgate remained unchanged, The GMC tailgate logo is characterized by the large center 'M' which extends laterally under both the "G" and the "C"

### 1960-1962 Short Bed

1. Bed side sheet metal is the same as the previous series but the angle strip has a different bolt hole pattern. Therefore the bed sides of 1955-1959 may be interchanged with 1960-1962 if the angle strip is changed to the desired year series.
2. The fender design is unchanged from the 1955-1959 model.
3. Rear sill mounting brackets are about 4" long and 3" tall, 39 3/4" apart. This rear sill will not fit the frame of another year series trucks without replacing the mounting brackets.
4. There are three cross sills and one reinforcing strip supporting the wood. The cross sills have a 1" tall spacer welded at each bed-to-frame bolt location.
5. Seven bed strips and eight boards. The board length is unchanged but the widths are different than 1955-1959 models. This affects bed strip bolt locations in rear sill, cross sills, reinforcing strip and front bed panel.
6. Bed strip and angle strip bolt locations are different than 1955-1959 models, making them not interchangeable.

7. Bed-to-frame bolt locations are unique for the 60-62 years. This affects bed wood, rear sill, and cross sills. These parts should not be interchanged to any other years because of the major modifications required.



#### 1963-1966 Short Bed

1. Bed side sheet metal is the same as the 55-59 and 62-66 but the 55-59 angle strip has a different bolt hole pattern. Therefore the bed sides of 1955 - 1959 may be interchanged with 1960-1966 if the angle strip is changed to the correct year series.
2. The fender design is unchanged from the 55-59 and 60-62 model.
3. Rear sill mounting brackets are about 4" long and 3" tall, 31 3/4" apart.
4. There are three cross sills and one reinforcing strip supporting the wood. The cross sills have a 1" tall spacer welded at each bed-to-frame bolt location. Because of this welded spacer, the cross sills should not be interchanged with any other year series due to the significant modifications required.
5. Seven bed strips and eight boards. The board length is unchanged from 60-62 models but the widths are different than 1955-1959 models. This affects bed strip bolt locations in rear sill, cross sills, reinforcing strip and front bed panel.
6. Bed strip and angle strip bolt locations are the same as 60-62 but different than 1955-1959 models, making them not interchangeable with 55-59.
7. Chevrolet tailgate remained unchanged. GMC tailgates changed to a block style lettering beginning in 1963.



#### 1967-1972 Short Bed

1. Bed side sheet metal is similar to previous years but the fender and step are changed as well as the angle strip bolt pattern. Other minor changes include the slightly larger bed side curl diameter and tail light mounting holes on the rear stake pockets.
2. The fender design changed for 1967 which changed the fender bolt pattern in the bed sides. 1968 and later fenders have side marker lights
3. The rear sill mounting brackets are about 4" long and 2 1/8" tall, 31 3/4" apart.

4. There are three cross sills and one reinforcing strip supporting the bed wood. The cross sills have a similar hole pattern as the 63-66 series but do not have the 1" spacer welded on the mounting hole locations. These cross sills could be used for the 63-66 application but would need to have the spacers welded to fit properly.
5. There are 7 bed strips and 8 boards. The bed wood boards have the same length and widths as the 63-66 series. The bed to frame bolt locations is different than the 63-66 trucks and the angle strip bolt pattern is also changed.
6. Bed strip and angle strip hole locations are different than the 63-66 series so these are not interchangeable.



### **1973-1987 Short Bed**

1. Bed side sheet metal is similar to previous years but the fender and step are changed as well as the angle strip bolt pattern. The bed side is shaped different than previous years in the area where the step attaches. Other minor changes include wiring loom holes in the bed sides below the wood in the rear area. Bed sides from this series will not work with previous years parts.
2. The fender design changed for 1973 which changed the fender bolt pattern in the bed sides. There are several minor fender design changes from year to year in the 73-87 series regarding the gas filler door. Be aware of these differences when attempting to interchange beds within this year series.
3. The rear sill mounting brackets are about 3" long and 2 1/8" tall, 31 1/4" apart.
4. There are three cross sills and two reinforcing strips supporting the bed wood. The cross sill and reinforcing strip patterns are different from all others so they are not interchangeable with other year series.
5. There are 6 bed strips and 7 boards. The bed wood boards have the same length as the previous years but the widths and mounting bolt patterns are different making them difficult to interchange.
6. Bed strip and angle strip hole locations are different than all previous years so these are not interchangeable. 73 -87 angle strips have their

bolts welded into the angle strips holes. Replacement of the bolts is difficult. Removing the boards from under the angle strip is not possible without ruining the board or totally separating the bedside, front bed panel, and rear sill.