

# 1969 Chevrolet Camaro Facts

Contributed by Mording42  
Friday, 08 February 2008

# The 1969 Camaro was the highest volume first generation Camaro, selling 243,085 units in a long model run that extended from September 26, 1968, through the end of November, 1969. The 1970 model Camaro wasn't introduced until February 26, 1970. This production total wasn't exceeded until 1978.

# Although part of the first generation of Camaros, the 1969 model received an extensive exterior and interior facelift. New exterior sheet metal included header, valance, fenders, doors, rear quarters, and rear end panel. Wheelwells were flattened for a more aggressive look. The standard grille was redone with sharper angles. The grille of the Rally Sport 1969 models featured vacuum operated covers over the headlights, but the covers had see through slits to permit partial lighting if the doors stuck.

# The 1969 Camaro was the only model year to have headlight washers. The system was operated by vacuum much like windshield washers. The headlight washers were included with all Rally Sports and could be purchased separately as RPO-CE1.

# Turbo Hydra-Matic automatic transmissions were available in any 1969 Camaro except Z28's. Availability was more restricted in previous years.

# Variable-ratio steering appeared in Camaros for the first time in 1969. This meant that as the steering wheel was turned, the wheels turned progressively more as they approached lock. This permitted faster steer but prevented excessively quick response in straight-line driving.

# The console and secondary sawtooth instrument cluster designs remained as in 1968, but the 1969 Camaro did get a redesigned main instrument panel. It featured two main pods as before, but 1969's were squared off instead of round. A smaller pod was placed between the two bigger ones. In the standard arrangement, the left pod housed the speedometer, the right pod the fuel gauge, and the center pod the optional clock. With the Special Instrumentation option, the secondary gauges (fuel, battery, temperature, oil) were mounted on the console, the tachometer rook over the big right side pod, and the clock again went into the center pod. If a tachometer was purchased separately in 1969 Camaros (the first time this could be done), the fuel gauge was relocated to the small center dash pod normally reserved for the clock.

# The 427-cid engine never appeared on 1969 dealer order sheets, but some were specially ordered by dealers. These were legitimate factory built vehicles. These 427-cid Camaros are known as COPO cars, the letters signifying Central Office Production Order. COPO 9560 Camaros included an aluminum block "ZL1" 427-cid engine. Sixty-nine of these Camaros were built, fifty for Chevrolet dealer-racer Fred Gibb and nineteen for other dealers. Although Chevrolet had toyed with the idea of a special graphics package for ZL1 Camaros (and actually built two for its own use), the ZL1 Camaros released to the public carried no special exterior identification. The option cost was \$4,160, more than the base Camaro itself. A second category of COPO 1969 Camaro was COPO 9561. These had iron-block 427-cid engines. Chevrolet dealer-racer Don Yenko received 201 (or 199, depending on the source) of these Camaros and sold some of them through his dealership with special Yenko graphics. Most of the Yenko Super Camaros were sold through Yenko's distributorship.

# Additional iron-block 427-cid Camaros were factory-built under COPO 9561, but the quantity isn't presently known. Additionally, dealer and owner installations of 427-cid motors into 1969 Camaros were common.

# Four-wheel disc brakes adapted from the Corvette became a legitimate factory option in 1969. It is a misconception that these were factory options only with Z28 and SS models. You could purchase RPO JL8 for any Camaro, but it cost more if it wasn't a Z/28 or SS - \$623.50 instead of \$500.30. The design of these brakes was completely different from the front disc rear drum option for 1969. The disc/drum combination used a new single piston, floating caliper design. The Corvette style was non-floating with four pistons per wheel.

# The 1969 Camaro was the first to offer two-tone paint.

# The Camaro was the pace car for the Indianapolis 500 auto race in 1969. Chevrolet sold 3,675 replicas of the pace car under Regular Production Option Z11. These were SS Rally Sport convertibles with code 911 Dover White exteriors, orange houndstooth cloth seats, custom interiors, orange striping, white body sills and rear panels, Rally Wheels, bright exhaust tips, and cowl induction hoods. Other options weren't mandatory, but to match the actual pace car, the following RPO's had to be ordered: A01, A39, A85, C06, D55, D80, G80, M40, N34, N40, U17, and U63. There were also a limited number of Pace Car hardtops produced under RPO Z10.

# All 1969 Camaros with four-speed transmissions came with Hurst shift linkages. Go to the [Hurst Shifters Site](#)

# Cowl induction hoods with rear facing cold air inlets were installed on all 427-cid COPO 1969 Camaros, on the pace car replicas, and could be factory-ordered for any SS or Z28. A fiberglass version of the cowl induction hood was also sold over-the-counter for use with the dual four-barrel carburetor crossram setup, or (with an adapter) with single four-barrel engines.

# Factory-applied stripes on 1969 Camaros with rear spoilers did not cover the small portion of trunk exposed between the spoiler and the taillight panel. Dealers and owners often painted the trunk lip.