VEHICLE INFORMATION LABELS

The Stickers You Need to Know!

By Guy Tiberio
VEHICLE INFORMATION LABELS

These are stickers applied by the manufacturer that give specific service information about that particular vehicle.

These come on the car when it is new.
Vehicle Identification Number

- Commonly Referred to at the VIN
- The VIN is a unique 17 digit number assigned to each car produced.
- No two cars will ever have the same VIN.
VIN, by law, will be located in the lower left hand corner of windshield or dashboard.

VIN will also be scattered throughout the vehicle.

Some will have a bar code associated with the VIN for easy recording of service info.
VIN Decoding

- The first digit represents the country of production origin. The most common are:
  - USA: 1, 4 or 5
  - Canada: 2
  - Mexico: 3
  - Japan: J
  - Korea: K
  - England: S
  - Germany: W
  - Italy: Z
  - Sweden: Y
  - Australia: 6
  - France: V
  - Brazil: 9

- The Second and third digit will list major manufacturer and vehicle line.

- Major Manufacturers-
  - Big 3 Domestic
    - General Motors
    - Ford
    - Chrysler
  - Big 3 Import
    - Honda
    - Toyota
    - Nissan
Some Examples of Vehicle Lines
- Chevrolet
- Pontiac
- Mercury
- Acura
- Buick
- Cadillac
- Ford
- Dodge
- Infiniti

BMW
Audi
VW
Saturn
Lincoln
Hummer
Mazda
Chrysler
Eagle
Kia
Hyundai
The 4th or 5th digit will be the vehicle platform. This is typically referred to as the body code or model. This will outline what type of car you are working on.

The 8th digit of the VIN will be the engine code. Very useful when ordering parts.

Example: 1988 Chevy Camaro
- V6- 2.8L MPI VIN S
- V8- 5.0L TBI VIN E
- V8- 5.0L TPI VIN F
- V8- 5.7L TPI VIN 8
10th digit designates the model year of the vehicle. 

- **Note:** VINs years do not include the letters I (i), O (o), Q (q), U (u) or Z (z), or the number 0, so that they will not be confused with similar looking numbers/letters.

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The last 6 digits of the VIN are the plant sequential code, or the number car that was built that year.

VINs that end in EX are experimental vehicles used for test and training purposes.

The first few hundred cars are usually not sold and are used for research and programs within the manufacturer to ensure defects do not end up on the road.
This label is located in the engine compartment in one of the following locations.

- Bottom of the hood
- Fan shroud
- Strut tower
- Heater box
Vehicle Emissions Label

- Info on the emissions label:
  - Model Year
  - Engine Size (in liters)
  - Spark Plug Gap
  - Emissions Control Type
  - Vacuum Hose Diagram
  - Tune Up Specs.
This will always be located on the drivers door jamb.

- This label will list the major manufacturer of the vehicle.

- Build date (month/year)

- Vehicle weights

- VIN

- May also have tire information.
Most important info on this label is the build date.

This is important for parts and recalls as the manufacturer continually changes parts and system designs through production to correct errors in engineering.

You must obtain parts for the proper build dates of the car you are working on.
Vehicle Weights

- Curb weight - weight of car when new with full fluids
- Gross vehicle weight - curb weight will full passengers and full cargo.
- Gross vehicle weight is the maximum the car should ever weigh without damage to vehicle or not allowing the vehicle to perform as designed.
Build date will tell the month and year that car was assembled.

Build date is different than model year.

Most cars start a new model year in August, so a car manufactured in August is actually the next model year up.

Ex. Honda Civic built on 10/02 is a 2003 model year.
Tire Information Label

- Located in drivers side door jamb.
- Can be front or rear door.
- Can be part of Certification label.
Tire Information Label (cont.)

- Tire size that originally came on car
  - Ex.-P235/65R17
  - Inflation pressure for tires. (kPa/PSI)

- Spare tire information
  - Size and PSI
Some tire labels will be part of the certification label.
Service Parts Identification Label

- Service Parts ID label can be located in a number of different locations.
  - Trunk
  - Center Console
  - Spare Tire Well
  - Glove Box
Service Parts Identification Label (cont.)

- VIN
- Paint Codes
- RPO codes
  - RPO = Regular Production Order
  - 3 digit codes that signify all options that the vehicle has from the factory.
The A/C label can be located in a number of locations in the engine compartment:

- Bottom of the hood
- Fan shroud
- Strut tower
- Any A/C part
This label will give the type of refrigerant the vehicle takes

- R12 - Cars 1992 and earlier
- R134A - Cars 1993-2017
- R1234YF - GM Cars 2013 and later. Other manufacturers to follow. Estimated by 2017 all cars will use it.

Give system capacity in lbs/oz or kg.
Coolant Type

- This may be a label or we may have to do some investigating to determine what type of coolant (anti-freeze) the vehicle takes.
- Some cars take a specific type of coolant, while others can use regular coolant.

Our main coolant types are:

- Regular coolant.
  - Green
  - 2 years/30k miles

- Extended life coolant.
  - Red, Yellow, Orange, Dark Blue, or Purple
  - 100k-150k and 5-10 years

- Coolants can not be mixed.
Regular coolant will have no label.

- In this case, we can either look up what type of coolant to use, look at what is already in the car, or look at the radiator cap.
- If cap is chrome, or has white or black writing on it, it is most likely regular coolant.
Extended Life may have a label or we may have to look at the radiator cap.

- The cap may say “Uses special coolant” or it may have red, yellow, or orange writing on it.
- Colored writing is not always an indicator, but can be a good clue.
Will be located in engine compartment.
Not all cars have this diagram.
Shows how belt routes around pulleys.
Even though belt may “fit” in a different configuration, they must be put on according to the diagram to ensure accessories spin the correct direction.