CORVETTE
Corvette is a rolling showcase of new technology, new materials and new thinking—all part of an evolutionary process that continues year after year. Adherence to the principle of engineering excellence has been applied to all areas, from the front bumper to the aircraft-style cockpit to the rear suspension system. It is these kinds of developments—detailed here—that make Corvette what it is today: one of the most renowned two-seat sports cars in the world.

For 1981, Corvette engineers took where none have gone before by developing the world’s first and only fiberglass-reinforced composite automotive spring (used with automatic transmission only). Even the Society of Plastic Engineers Grand Award. This monoleaf rear spring— at 8 lbs.— replaces a 41-lb. steel multileaf spring. And it’s not just lighter, it’s more efficient. It can store six times the strain-energy per unit weight than a comparable weight of spring steel. This is the lightest possible leaf spring application to be found in any automotive suspension. And steel interleaf friction is eliminated. This fiberglass spring supports the weight of the car that rests on the rear wheels and provides suspension compliance. Wheel position is controlled by a system of links and pivots.

Attention to detail for 1981 includes other engineering developments such as magnesium valve rocker covers and stainless steel exhaust manifolds. And an improved anti-theft alarm system with starter interrupt feature to disable the starting circuit if forced entry is made, even if the ignition switch is bypassed. The whole system is passive—it is easily armed and disarmed automatically when you lock and unlock the doors. Also new is an auxiliary electric fan that cuts in quietly and automatically if extra cooling is needed. This allows use of a smaller engine fan with fewer, heavier blades for reduced drag and quieter operation.

Computer Command Control. It sounds high tech and it is. It’s an on-board computer that adjusts ignition timing and air fuel mixture by continuously monitoring specific functions, fine-tunes the engine under all normal operating conditions as you drive. Altitude, barometric pressure and temperature changes are factored in. The whole system is even self-diagnostic. It pinpoints problems for your Chevrolet service technician. And it's even covered by the 5-year, 50,000-mile emissions warranty. Ask your dealer for details.

For automatic transmissions, a computer-controlled torque converter clutch in second and third gears is new. It engages at most road and load driving conditions for efficient rear wheel power transfer— unlike the slipping normally found in conventional automatic transmissions.

Look at engineering breakthroughs introduced in 1980. Corvette’s front and rear bumper systems were reduced by 84 lbs. Fit and finish appearance and aerodynamics were improved, as well as aerodynamic drag efficiency. The front bumper consists of a three-piece fiberglass supporting structure to replace the earlier steel parts. Aluminum intake manifolds eliminated another 24 lbs. And aluminum also found its place in a new rear axle assembly.

A WORD ABOUT THIS CATALOG: We have tried to make this catalog as comprehensive and factual as possible and we hope you find it helpful. However, since the time of printing, some of the information you will find here may have been updated. Also, some of this equipment shown or described throughout this catalog is available at extra cost. Your dealer has details and, before ordering, you should ask him to bring you up to date.

The right is reserved to make changes at any time, without notice, in prices, colors, materials, equipment, specifications and models. Check with your Chevrolet dealer for complete information.

"We critique Corvette with the same engineering objectivity we'd use to evaluate a military aircraft: What is Corvette's mission? How well does it carry out that mission?"

Dave McLellan,
Chief Engineer, Corvette
In the Corvette philosophy of evolutionary development is a brand-new assembly plant in Bowling Green, Kentucky, that will replace during this year the plant at St. Louis, where Corvettes have been built for 28 years. The Bowling Green facility, which will build Corvettes exclusively, is an investment in Corvette’s future. It represents the experience and knowledge learned over all those years, which are reflected in the state-of-the-art innovative technology used to build Corvettes.

Just one of those modern technological innovations is a new paint process. In addition to many solid colors, four new optional two-tone treatments celebrate the opening of the new plant. All solid and two-tone metallics employ a base coat/clear coat application for outstanding beauty. This method allows use of glitter metallics with large-flake high-metallic content. And the clear acrylic enamel finish coat gives a depth of luster not possible with conventional paint finishes. It also provides a measure of protection against the elements. The four two-tone color combinations are shown on this page. See the back cover for solid color listing.

“...What you see here is a reflection of our constant striving to build a great road machine. The plant and the paint system are two examples of Chevrolet’s commitment to quality.”

— Dave McLellan
STANDARD EQUIPMENT

Engine
5.7-liter (350 CID) 4-bbl. 90-V8 engine

Black-accented magnesium rocker covers

Tubular stainless steel exhaust manifolds

Chrome-plated air cleaner cover

Sealed side terminal Delco Freedom II heavy-duty battery

Auxiliary electric cooling fan

Computer Command Control High Emission System

Drive train

Fully synchronized 4-speed manual transmission or automatic transmission with converter clutch feature in both second and third gears

Console-mounted shift lever with leather boot

Limited-slip rear axle with aluminum differential housing support

Electrical

Power windows with console-mounted controls

AM/FM push-button radio with dual front speakers and fixed mast antenna (may be deleted for credit)

Air conditioning heater and defroster with 3-speed blower

Full instrumentation—speedometer with trip odometer, 7,000-RPM tachometer, voltmeter, oil pressure, and water temperature gauges

Quartz analog clock

Warning lights for low fuel, brakes, electric choke, seat belts and generator

Washer and dual-speed wipers with time-delay feature

Illuminated visor mirror for passenger

Courtesy and dome lights with time delay

Ashtray and cigarette lighter in center console

Dual-unit retractable headlamps with halogen inner high beams

Automatic combing lights

Dual horns

Underhood light

Body interior

Molded shell seats with foam pads and high pivot folding backs that fold flat (passenger only)

Padded vinyl and carpeted doors with map pockets

Leather with vinyl trim on top of full cloth seat trim

Molded cut-pile carpeting with carpeted floor mats

Glove box lock and light

Dual padded sunshades (driver side shade extends)

Rear underfloor storage compartment with lock

Interior hood release

Tilt/Telescopic steering wheel with leather-wrap trim

Center console with coin tray

Carpeted luggage area with concealed shade

Day-night rearview mirror

Chassis

Power steering

Power four-wheel disc brakes with dual hydraulic circuits and brake warning light

Steel-belted radial ply blackwall tires (4)

Rally wheels with bright trim rings (4) and center caps

Lighweight bias-ply fully inflated spare tire and wheel

Independent front suspension with coil springs and stabilizer bar

Independent rear suspension

Fiberglass reinforced composite single leaf spring with hydraulic shock absorption, steel multi-leaf spring with manual shock absorption

Integrated energy-absorbing rear and rear bumpers

Side sill jack

24-gallon fuel tank with high-density polyethylene liner

Corrosion resistance

Steel-reinforced fiberglass body

Galvanized steel body floor

Hot-melt wax frame coating

ZincorePlus® coating for power steering fuel and brake lines

SAFETY FEATURES

Occupant protection

Manual lap shoulder belts for driver (with reminder light and buzzer) and passenger

Energy-absorbing steering column

Passenger guard door locks

Safety door latches and stamped steel hinges

Energy-absorbing padded instrument panel with anti-reflective upper surface

Laminated windshield/tempered side and rear glass

Safety armrests

International identification symbols for controls and displays

Anti-theft

Anti-theft audio alarm system with starter interrupt feature

Anti-theft ignition key reminder

Anti-theft steering column lock

OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT

Delco radios. Choose a Delco AM/FM stereo radio or select from available Delco ETR AM/FM stereo radio models

- With 8-track tape player
- With cassette tape player
- With CB and 6-track tape player
- With CB and cassette tape player

These ETR™ (Electronically Tuned Receiver) AM/FM stereo models feature LED readout, improved power (40% increase over 1980 models), improved AM noise reduction, electronic station memory, front/rear balance controls, automatic loudness control and more. All Citizens Band ETR radios include power tilt/trim antenna. Power antenna option with other radios. All ETR radios include a digital clock (standard clock replaced by oil temperature gauge when ETR radio is ordered).

Dual rear speakers, with extended frequency range, included with all stereo radios for dynamic sound reproduction

GM Continuity Protection Plan

It offers service protection in addition to that provided by GM’s new vehicle limited warranty. Ask your dealer about it.

Coverage is limited to U.S.A. and Canada for 1981 model year.

A word about assembly components and optional equipment in these Corvettes

The Chevrolets described in this catalog are assembled at facilities of General Motors Corporation operated by the General Assembly Division. These vehicles incorporate thousands of different components provided by various divisions of General Motors and by various suppliers to General Motors. From time to time during the manufacturing process, it may be necessary in order to meet production schedules for particular vehicles or equipment, or to meet federally mandated emission, safety and fuel economy requirements, or for other reasons, to produce Chevrolet products with different components or differently sourced components than initially scheduled. All such components have been approved for use in Chevrolet products and will provide the quality performance associated with the Chevrolet name.

With respect to extra cost optional equipment, make certain you specify the type of equipment you desire on your order and order the equipment from your dealer. Some options may be unavailable when your car is built. Your dealer can provide advice regarding current availability of options. You may ask the dealer for this information. GM also requests the dealer to advise you if an option you ordered is unavailable. We suggest that you verify that your order includes the optional equipment you ordered or, if there are changes, that they are acceptable to you.

Six-way power driver’s seat

Six-way control provides good seat position for comfort, visibility and operating control access

Electric rear window defogger.

Aluminum wheels.

Removable glass roof panels with solar screening to help keep vehicle interior cooler

Goodyear white-lettered, steel-belted radial tires

P255/70R-15

P255/60R—15—Eagle GT

Roof panel carrier (rear deck)

Gymkhana sports suspension includes rear stabilizer bar, higher rate rear steel springs and special tuned front and rear shock absorbers (included with trailer equipped package).

Power door lock system

Heavy-duty shock absorbers.

Trailer equipment package includes heavy-duty radiator and Gymkhana suspension (requires automatic transmission).

2.87 ratio performance axle for automatic transmission (California only).
### Specifications

#### CORVETTE POWER TEAMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Engine</th>
<th>Transmissions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard all states</td>
<td>4-Speed Manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordering Code</td>
<td>Automatic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.7 Liter 4-Bbl. V8(A)</td>
<td>Standard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L81</td>
<td>(B)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>350 Cu. In.</td>
<td>4-speed Manual with 2.72 Final Drive Ratio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.2:1</td>
<td>(No Extra Charge) 3-speed Automatic with 2.87 Final Drive Ratio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>190 @ 4200 RPM</td>
<td>Net Torque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>280 Lb.- Ft. @ 1600 RPM</td>
<td>4-Speed Manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(A)Produced by GM: Chevrolet Motor Division.</td>
<td>Automatic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(B)Available in place of standard four-speed manual transmission at no extra charge.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### A WORD ABOUT ENGINES

Corvettes are equipped with GM-built engines produced by Chevrolet Motor Division. Please refer to power team information on this page, or see your dealer for details.

#### GENERAL


#### TRANSMISSION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Optional</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4-speed Manual with 2.72 Final Drive Ratio</td>
<td>3-speed Automatic with 2.87 Final Drive Ratio</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### CHASSIS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Front Suspension</th>
<th>Rear Suspension</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### STEERING—TYPE

Power-assisted Recirculating Ball with Tilt and Telescopic Adjustments

- Steering Wheel Turns, Lock to Lock: 2.58
- Turning Circle, Curb to Curb: 40.4 Feet

#### BRAKE SYSTEM

Power Four-wheel 11.75-inch Ventilated Disc Brakes with Dual Hydraulic Circuits and Warning Lights

#### TIRES—TYPE

Steel-belted, Radial Ply Blackwall—Size P225/70R-15

#### DIMENSIONS (Inches)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exterior</th>
<th>Interior</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wheelbase</td>
<td>98.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length (overall)</td>
<td>185.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Width (overall)</td>
<td>69.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Height (loaded)</td>
<td>48.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tread, Front/Rear</td>
<td>58.7/59.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Room</td>
<td>36.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leg Room</td>
<td>42.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hip Room</td>
<td>49.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoulder Room</td>
<td>47.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usable Luggage Capacity (cu. ft.)</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### APPROXIMATE CURB WTS. (lbs.)

| Manual Transmission | 3345 |
| Automatic Transmission | 3345 |

#### COLOR CHOICES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Solid Exterior</th>
<th>Two-Tone Exterior (Upper/Lower) (Optional at Extra Cost)</th>
<th>Interior</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Silver Metallic</td>
<td>Cloth Bucket Seats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Dark Blue Metallic</td>
<td>Camel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Mahogany Metallic</td>
<td>Dark Blue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>Claret Metallic</td>
<td>Silver Gray</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beige</td>
<td>Maroon Metallic</td>
<td>Dark Red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Charcoal Metallic</td>
<td>Black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dark Bronze Metallic</td>
<td>Rust</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### LONG RECOMMENDED SERVICE INTERVALS*

| Engine Oil | 12 months or 7,500 miles |
| Oil Filter | 12 months or 7,500 miles; every 15,000 miles thereafter |
| Spark Plugs | 30,000 miles |
| Chassis Lubrication | 12 months or 7,500 miles |
| Automatic Transmission Fluid Change | Every 100,000 miles |

*See Owner's Manual for conditions requiring more frequent intervals.