

# 1962 Dodge Polara 500

## Featured Mopar Ride

*David writes:* I had always wanted a 1962 Dodge B-Body but in a search for nearly 40 years the effort was futile. Most were cut up in the 1960's to serve as drag cars. One day while reading a daily Hemmings this one was featured as the *Car of the Day*. I could not believe my eyes and immediately began to negotiate with the seller, Classic Rides Factory, LLC from Calimesa, CA.

We agreed on a price and based on pictures, the right answers to my questions, I purchased it sight unseen and the seller set out to make it ready to transport to my location ASAP.



The 1962 to  
1965 Mopar  
Web Site



The 1962 to 1965 Mopar Web Site

The Dodge was transported to my doorstep and put in the garage; the Mopar was waiting for me when I returned from my month-long plus travel.

## Engine and Vehicle Data

- The engine is a 413 Max Wedge.



The 1962 to 1965 Mopar Web Site

*AAQA Max Wedge casting, commonly with 2R or 3R*

[1852029](#) is the side casting number in 1962 for the Max Wedge 413. On this engine I can view 852029, though the leading 1 is not clearly visible.

The rebuild is estimated to be at about 20,000 to 23,000 miles ago by an Los Angeles Max Wedge specialist, who since passed away. (I think the engine builder may have dropped the compression ratio down to 10 to 1, to allow running on today's lower octane gas.)

- Crossram manifold with dual AFB type Edelbrock 600 CFM carburetors
- HP 563 @ 4600 RPM
- Torque 545 @ 4600 RPM
- Compression is 10:1
- Cam 284/296, 507/510 Lift – Extreme High Performance
- Valves S.S. 2.14 Intake, 1.81 Exhaust with Crane roller rockers
- Drivetrain 727 Push-Button 3 speed TorqueFlite, 8-3/4 inch SureGrip 3.55 gear rear end
- Suspension is Super Stock.
- Brakes: 11 inch Disks (Front end from a 1973 Dodge Charger); 11 inch x 3 inch drums; Rear portioning valve is at the back, set at 60/40 or 70/30.

- Ignition – All electronic MSD and Mopar - no points distributor
- Timing advance is 12 degrees before TDC.
- Oil is 10-40 weight.
- Fuel to be used is premium. Each tank full I add JP Racing 109 Octane to prevent dieseling.



The Dodge arrived with two very small 6 inch air cleaners. I first changed with 10 inch and then with the help of Mancini Racing I was able to obtain two 14 inch dropped down (1.5 inches) base plate to allow clearance under the hood. That improved the Mopar's breathing greatly, meaning better acceleration.



6 inch



10 inch



14 inch

The Dodge did not come without a few minor problems. Apparently, the previous owner drove the car about 20,000 miles after the engine build and never changed the spark plugs. The engine was only firing on 5 cylinders. Pictured [right] you can see the plug gaps. The video below shows how the porcelain insulator in the plug hardest to access was loose and that cylinder made a chugging sound.



[Click to play video](#) of loose spark plug insulator.

[Note: This will open a new window and play the video, or will download the video to play on your computer, depending on what web browser you use.]

The second problem was that the intake manifold was incorrectly installed; it was missing spacers and did not have gaskets at the heads -- just a thick glob of some type of sealant that had blown out in several places. Vacuum levels and braking efficiency were consequently negatively impacted.

Replacing the bad plugs and fixing the leaky intake manifold really woke up the 413. And with vacuum for braking, the Dodge stops well too!

The third challenge was the missing 500 script from the passenger side door.



*missing 500 script*

It took me nearly two years to find the part. Using the resources of the [1962 to 1965 Mopar Website](#) and associated [1962 to 1965 Mopar Mail List Clubhouse](#) I was able find two scripts that needed posts added and re-chroming.



*500 script installed*

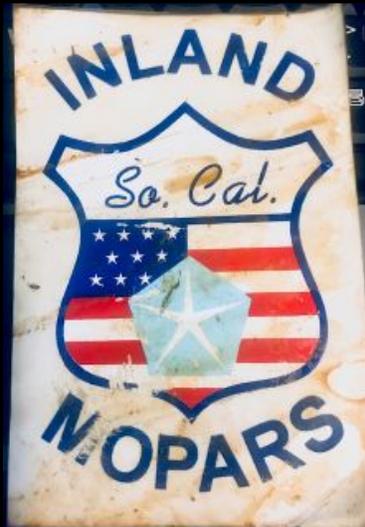
I obtained these through connections with a member of a [1962 to 1965 Mopar Mail List Clubhouse](#) from Ohio. (A big THANK YOU to him! And also to everyone who helped me search for, acquire and repair these very hard to find 1962 Dodge Polara 500 door scripts!)

I also had a new headliner installed, which required the rear window to be removed. So the next challenge was finding a gasket. Problem solved by Kramer Automotive Specialties [Editor's note: [listed on the 1962 to 1965 Mopar Vendor's Page.](#)] The installation went well; the upholstery person used to work for the Harris Car Collection years ago and obtains period correct materials. (Note: He had did a fantastic job on my 1957 DeSoto Fireflight over 20 years ago. Pictured to the right.)



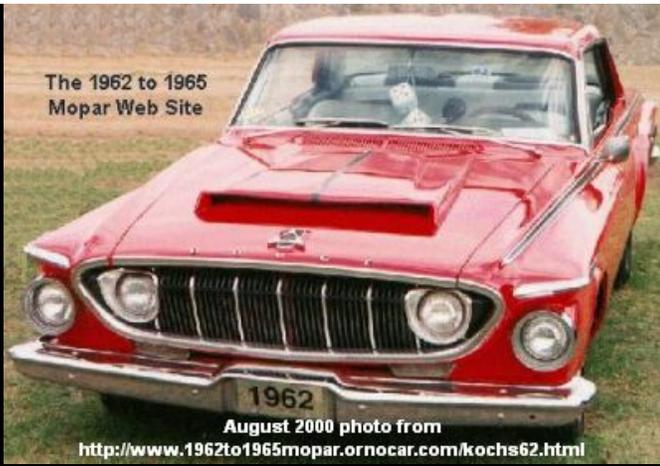
Also, I replaced all the rubber bumpers, as well as the door, trunk and ignition lock cylinders so that one key works every thing. I got a carburetor synchronizer so both carbs pair perfectly. I installed new front and rear shocks; the Dodge tracks straight as an arrow.

Once I began to have everything in good order, I decided to try and contact the previous owners. The one whom I purchased the Mopar from was not much help and due to some of the items not being well maintained I determined that was not a good source. So I found an old car show plaque in the trunk, an [Inland Mopar So. Cal.](#) sticker and a 1962 license plate apparently used by the first restorer for car shows.



The *Inland Mopars So. Cal.* sticker and the old car show plaque with *6th Annual Rosa Maria's Wild Summer Nights*

The car show plaque investigation came up blank. So I contacted the president of Inland Mopars. He questioned members of the club. They did not remember the Dodge, but remembered the owner who was known as Susan Koch in August 2001; but there was a name change and the trail went cold. That is, until I clicked on the 1962 Dodge Polara section of B-Bodies on the 1962 to 1965 Mopar Website and found [a web page from August 2000 posted for this Dodge.](#)



I now have the exact car, except I have black dice in the windshield now.

## Car Shows

The judges are all over this 1962 Polara 500 at every show.



First show out the 1962 placed in the Circle of Champions at Redding Kool April Nites.



The 1962 to 1965 Mopar Web Site



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The 1962 to 1965 Mopar Web Site

Plus \$100 cash!



The 1962 to 1965 Mopar Web Site



The 1962 to 1965 Mopar Web Site



The 1962 to 1965 Mopar Web Site



This was a totally Mopar meet. Mopars in the Park put on by [Capital City Mopars](#). I picked the wrong category. I should have gone with B-Body. But I went with 1955 to 1975 which was a huge number of cars. Getting third.

This show the Dodge was lumped in with every car from 1960 to 1969. 1st and 2nd place were both highly customized. The 1962 Dodge is stock.



At the August 2018 [Chico Concours d'Elegance car show](#) a third place award was granted the Polara 500. This was in a Concours setting with judging following [Sports Car Club of America](#) guidelines. I was highly honored!

Third Place Award in the class  
*Class O, Domestic Muscle (Stock)*  
 1961 - 1976

I asked the director of judging for the Chico Concours d'Elegance to share with me the score I received for future purposes toward improving the score. 94 out of 100! I am blown away. I would have never dreamed the score would be anywhere near 100 points. This is third place in Class O, Domestic Muscle (Stock) 1961 - 1976. [[View the judging score sheet.](#)]

The 1962 to 1965  
Mopar Web Site



*Best of Show*



The 1962 to 1965  
Mopar Web Site

Ask  
me if I  
am  
having  
fun –  
YES!



The 1962 to  
1965 Mopar  
Web Site

Right now as far as being a dependable "jump in and go" vehicle, I would put this 1962 Dodge against the family's Range Rover Sport. Of course, the the Rangie is soother, quieter and has AC. It lacks the same "fun factor" though. (Adding AC to the Dodge is a future challenge.)

The bottom line is that this 1962 Dodge Polara 500 runs perfect! I have run the car back from shows at 105 degrees outside at 80 MPH for several hours and the Mopar does not miss a beat. Also, the Dodge does not loose a drop of any fluids.

In fact, the Mopar runs super strong -- as several friends who have 425 3-2 Vets and a Chevelle restomod with an LS9 will testify: they cannot stay with the Dodge.

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[Go back to the 1962 to 1965 Mopar Web Site Home Page.](#)