

1967-69 Camaro

The Empire Strikes Back

It was a position that the General Motors of the sixties was not accustomed to: playing catch up. Ford had taken the automotive world by storm with the April, 1964 introduction of the Mustang, and GM had no bullets in the chamber to fire back. There were sporty versions of the Nova and Corvair, but they were hardly enough. It didn't matter that the Mustang was mostly a reskinned Falcon, it had lots of style and the marketing boys hit an absolute grand slam with their advertising and promotion campaigns. GM was caught with its pants down, and they knew it.

Marshalling resources no one else could, GM's "Pony Cars" (a name GM hated) debuted in the fall of '66. Chevy had the Camaro, Pontiac got the Firebird. They followed the same blueprint as the Mustang: simple engineering, lots of options, lots of image. Everything from a pleasant looking 6-cylinder economy car to a full-on big-block muscle car was available.

Known as "first generation" Camaros, they helped write a new chapter in the spirited Ford vs. Chevy battle that continued in one



degree or another right through the end of the Camaro is 2002.

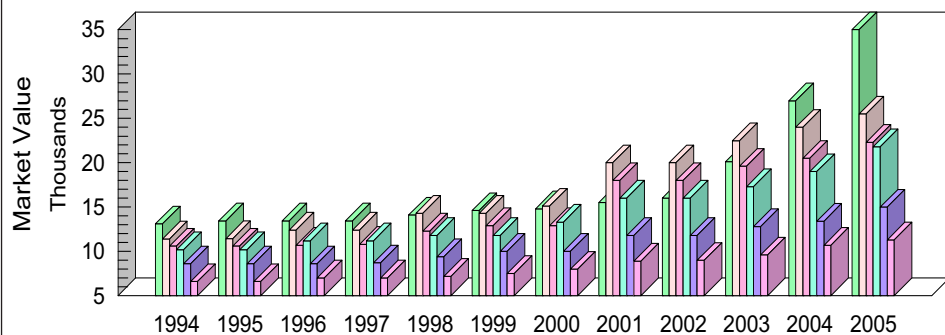
What does the current market look like for these first generation Camaros? Like most American performance cars of the era, quite strong. While the Camaro may not have won the original sales race when new, it is more than holding its own right now. The big guns in the lineup, big block SS and RS models, are highly sought after with nice examples regularly pushing the \$30,000 mark in coupe form and \$40,000 with the rag top. Small-block versions aren't that far behind. Even base models bring strong money and are disappearing fast, as most appear to be candidates for replica SS, RS, and Z/28 models. They're popular resto mods, and they're a hit with the various "stylers" out there, too. The desirable Pace

Car option (RPO Z11) included the SS and RS packages and came in Dover White with orange stripes and interior. About 3,675 were built.

At the top of the regular production chain (we're not talking COPOS here) is the Z/28, a model introduced in mid '67 to qualify the Camaro for Trans AM competition (which, by the way, Camaro won in '68 and '69). Featuring a high-revving destroked 327 at 302ci and 290hp, 4sp manual transmission (no automatic was available), heavy-duty 12 bolt rear, 15in wheels, front disc brakes and special springs, this was a car about balance. The big-blocks could beat it in the quarter, but a Z could run away and hide as soon as the road got twisty. Pretty light on it's feet and satisfyingly strong in the upper revs, it's a very enjoyable drive. Exotic fac-

67-69 Chevrolet Camaro
Average #2 Condition

- 69 Z/28 Htp
- 69 SS396/350hp Htp
- 68 SS396/325hp Conv
- 69 Base Conv V8
- 69 SS/RS 350 Conv
- 67 Base Htp V8



Always a crowd pleaser, even the base 325hp 396 big-block is potent in the Camaro



The '69 got square pods for the speedo and tach. This one has the desirable deluxe interior with houndstooth fabric and full console with gauges.



A pretty rare sight, most people don't even know about the '67 Pace Car!

tory stuff like 4-wheel disc brakes and 2x4bbl carb intakes are highly coveted and can add significant value. Except for a one-off built for Pete Estes, Chevy's top executive at the time, all are 2dr hardtops.

As for the future, it's a safe bet that at the very least they will market perform over the long term. We'll go one step further and say that they will out-perform the market by a good 5-10% on the upside, while not exposing you to that premium should there be a market correction.



Above and right: An increasingly rare sight, the base models are clean and attractive in their own right. Most end up as SS/RS models with a crate 350. Too bad. '69 above, '68 right.

-- end Camaro --
photos courtesy of General Motors

Running Changes Production

1967

- Introduced September, 1966
- Big blocks phased in during November
- 78 replica Indy Pace Car (white RS/SS convertibles with blue interiors) produced for Indy 500. Unknown number (less than 500) replicas produced for Chevy's Pacesetter ad campaign.
- Z-28s become available to the public in January, 1967.

Production: RS: 64,842 • SS: 34,411
Z-28: 609

1968

- Slightly revised grille
- Side vent windows dropped for flow-through ventilation
- Federally mandated side marker lights added
- Restyled center console
- First year for clock in tach option
- Multi-leaf rear springs replace mono units
- Rear shocks now staggered
- Houndstooth cloth first used
- Big block SS models got a unique hood

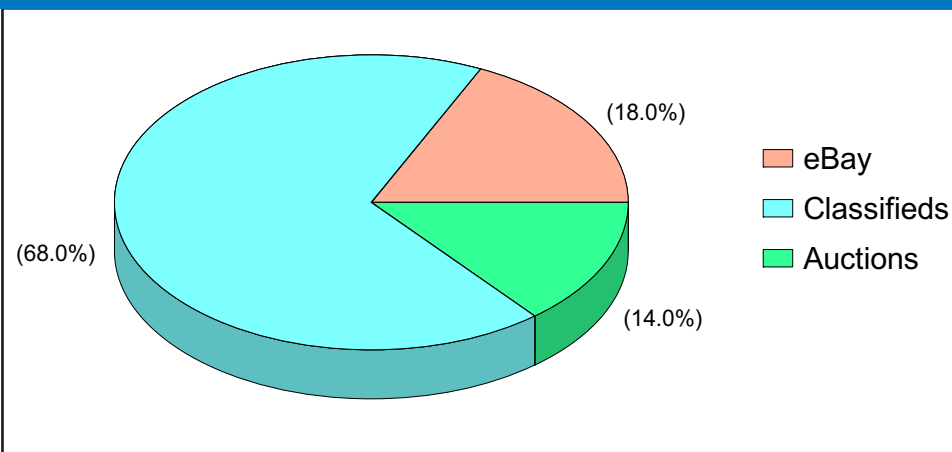
Production: RS: 40,977 • SS: 27,884
Z-28: 7,199

1969

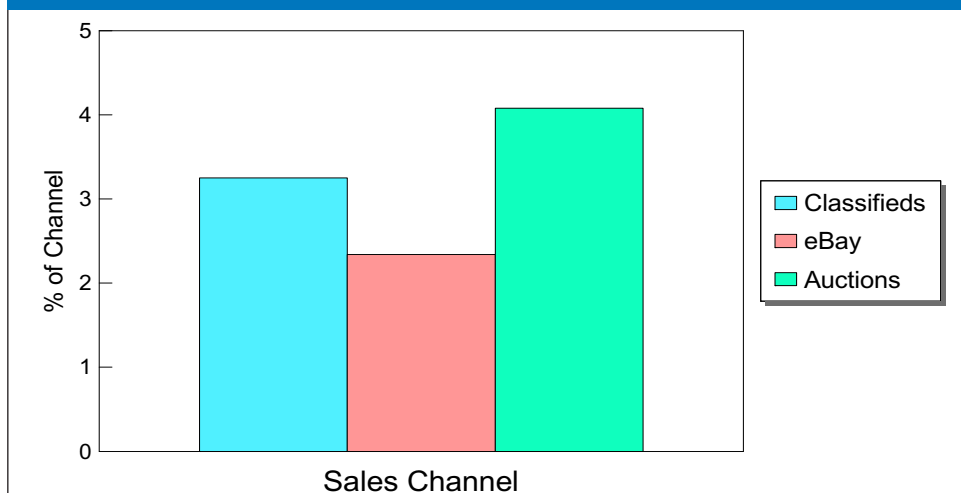
- New grille, headlight and taillight styling
- Redesigned dash with square pods
- COPO 427 option available at an eye-popping \$4000+
- New cowl-induction hood available
- Pace Car option available again (see story)
- 4-wheel disc brakes now a factory option (JL8) on all Camaros

Production: RS: 37,773 • SS: 33,980
Z-28: 19,014

Availability by Sales Channel



Sales Channel Supply



A scan of the current market shows a healthy supply of First Generation Camaros. Most are available in classifieds, with eBay and traditional auctions far behind. Just over 4% of all cars brought to collector car auctions the past three months, 3.25% of 1946-1979 classifieds, and about 2.5% of 1946-1979 cars offered on eBay were 1967-1969 Camaros -- strong numbers in all.