

Table of Contents

1968 Sportster	1
Vehicle Identification	1
Frame Numbers	1
Engine Serial Numbers	1
Specifications	2
Model Designations	2
Dimensions	2
Engine	2
Capacities	3
Clutch	3
Drivetrain	4
Tires	4
XLH 883	4
XLCH 883	4
Engine	4
External Links	5

1968 Sportster

Model Production Numbers

- XLH 1,975
- XLCH 4,900

Colors ¹⁾

- Black with Black Wrinkle tank panels and White Strip.
- On black bikes, the tank panel was most likely plain black, not wrinkle.
- Jet Fire Orange with Black Wrinkle tank panels and White Strip.
 - Options:
 - Sparkling Burgundy with Black Wrinkle tank panels and White Strip.
 - Sparkling Blue with Black Wrinkle tank panels and White Strip.

Vehicle Identification

Frame Numbers

There was no frame identification for purpose of ownership on 1957-1969 model Sportsters. However, there were stampings on the different parts of the frame combined with certain features that can be used to date the frame.

[Click Here](#) to view Ironhead Frame Identification in the Sportsterpedia.

Engine Serial Numbers

The only numbers for the purpose of identification were on the engine case.

- The engine serial number is stamped on the left side of the engine case between the two cylinders. The first 5 or 6 digits represent the year and model ²⁾
From 1962-1969, models with 4 digit production (serial) numbers have an even-numbered first digit for even years and odd numbered first digit for odd years.

[Click Here](#) for more specific information on serial numbers and VINs in the Sportsterpedia (including the 1962-1969 Even/Odd Rule).

Engine Serial Number for 1968 Sportsters

Model Year (first 2 digits)	Model (next few digits) (up to 4)	Sequential Serial# (remaining digits)
68	XLH XLCH	(example) 12345
Example: (68XLCH 12345) indicates a 1968 XLCH model and is stamped on the Left Engine Case Between the Cylinders ³⁾		
Example Serial Number on Engine Reads: 68XLCH12345		
68	XLCH	12345

Specifications

[Click Here](#) for the main technical menu in the Sportsterpedia.

Also see the "Misc Resources" section on the bottom of that page for technical docs and information.

Model Designations

- XLH, XLCH

Dimensions

- Wheelbase: ⁴⁾
 - XLH, 56.5 in / 143.51 cm
 - XLCH, 58-1/2 in / 148.59 cm
- Overall Length:
 - XLH, 89 in / 226.06 cm
 - XLCH, 83.25 in / 211.45 cm
- Overall Width:
 - XLH, 34 in / 86.36 cm
 - XLCH, 34 in / 86.36 cm
- Overall Height:
 - XLH, 40-1/2 in / 103 cm
 - XLCH, 42 in / 106.7 cm
- Road Clearance:
 - XLH, 5-1/2 in to 6-3/4 in / 13.97 cm to 17.14 cm ⁵⁾ (67 and 69 FSMs differ)
 - XLCH, 6-1/2 in to 6-7/8 in / 16.51 cm to 17.46 cm

Engine

- Engine type: 4 cycle Overhead Valves, 45 degree V2 ⁶⁾
- Hemi-spherical style heads
- Displacement: 53.9 ci / 883 cc (900 cc advertised)

- Compression Ratio: 9:1
- Bore: 3 in / 76.2 mm
- Stroke: 3.8125 in / 96.8 mm
- Horsepower: 55 @ 6,300rpm ⁷⁾
- Taxable Horsepower: 7.2
- Torque: 52 ft-lb @ 3800 RPM
- Weight:
 - XLCH - 188lbs.
 - XLH - 204 lbs.
- Engine serial number stamped on left side case between the two cylinders.
[Click Here](#) for more information on serial numbers and VINs in the Sportsterpedia.
- 4 Cams
- [Gear driven type oil pump](#).
Oil pump pressure (gauge mounted in place of oil pressure switch):
 - Idle, with spark retarded (Min: 3-7 psi)
 - Normal riding conditions: 10-14 psi (6 psi at 20 mph)
- [XLH Ignition](#): Battery Ignition System (circuit breaker/points/timer/distributor)
 - Point Gap: .020"
- [XLCH Ignition](#): Magneto Ignition System
 - Point Gap: .015"
- Dwell: 90° at 1000 RPM
- Ignition Timing
 - Advanced - XLH, XLCH: 45° (11/16") BTDC
 - Retarded - XLH: 15° (5/64") BTDC
- Spark Plugs
 - #4 for everyday use.
 - #5 for hard service.
 - Gap
 - XLH: .025"-.030"
 - XLCH: .020"
- [Fuel System](#): Tillotson HD carburetor.
- Starter
 - XLCH: [Kick Start](#) only.
 - XLH: [Electric Start](#) only (Prestolite).

Capacities

- Fuel Capacity: ⁸⁾
 - XLH 4 gal / 15.14 l
 - XLCH 2.2 gal / 8.328 l
- Oil Capacity: 3 qts. / 2.83 l
- Transmission Capacity: 1.5 pints / .71 l

Clutch

- Multi-Disc dry clutch-pack with alternate steel and fiber friction plates. ⁹⁾

Drivetrain

- Constant Mesh - right side foot shift ¹⁰⁾
- Speeds - 4 Forward
- Number of Sprocket Teeth (XLH / XLCH):
 - Engine: 34
 - Clutch: 59
 - Transmission: 20
 - Rear Wheel: 51
- Standard Gear Ratios (XLH / XLCH)
 - 1st: 11.16:1
 - 2nd: 8.08:1
 - 3rd: 6.11:1
 - 4th: 4.42:1

Tires

Tire pressure (based on a rider weighing app. 150 lbs or more).

For each 50 lbs of overload, increase rear tire pressure by 2 lbs, front by 1 lb (but not exceeding manuf max tire pressure). ¹¹⁾

- XLH / XLCH:
 - Front: 3.25 / 3.50 x 19 (tire Pressure: 16 psi / 1.10 bar) ¹²⁾
 - Rear: 4.0 x 18 (tire pressure: 20 psi / 1.37 bar) ¹³⁾

XLH 883

What is the Current KBB Value? ¹⁴⁾

XLCH 883

What is the Current KBB Value? ¹⁵⁾

Engine



16)

External Links

[1968 Parts Manual \(1.52mb\)](#)¹⁷⁾

Back to [Sportster History Index](#)

1)

<https://www.harleykmodel.com/technical/colors/index.html>

2)

HD Parts Catalog XLH/XLCH-1000 #(99451-78)

3)

1953-1963 HD Parts Catalog backside of front cover

4) 6) 7) 8)

Harley-Davidson 1957 - 1969 Service Manual

5)

HD 1969 Sportster Service Manual

9)

1957-1969 HD FSM pg 4A-3

10)

1957-1969 HD FSM pg 1A-3

11)

1959-1964 HD FSM pg 1A-3

12) 13)

HD TSB #516A dated October 15, 1966

14)

<http://www.kbb.com/motorcycles/harley-davidson/xlh-sportster/1968-harley-davidson-xlh-sportster/trade-in/>

15)

<http://www.kbb.com/motorcycles/harley-davidson/xlch-sportster/1968-harley-davidson-xlch-sportster/trade-in/>

16)

photo by fdny37 of the XLFORUM <http://xlforum.net/forums/showthread.php?t=314377>

17)

<https://www.harleykmodel.com/literature/spare-parts-catalogs/documents/99451-68/99451-68.pdf>

From:

<http://sportsterpedia.com/> - **Sportsterpedia**

Permanent link:

http://sportsterpedia.com/doku.php/sportster_history:1968_sportster

Last update: **2021/09/15 01:00**

