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This 1962 Chevrolet Corvair Rampside Reminds Us of When Pickups Were Weird

Not all American pickups have their engines up front.



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AUG 30, 2018



We tend to think the layout of the American pickup truck—ladder frame, bed in back, engine up front—hasn't changed in a hundred years. And that's mostly true: as Chevy will happily tell you, a 1918 Half-Ton and a 2018 Silverado share this basic layout, as do most of the pickups in between. But for a time, America's pickup truck manufacturers experimented with some much weirder things, like this 1962 Corvair 95 Rampside.

Welcome to You Must Buy, our daily look at the cars you really should be buying instead of that boring commuter sedan.

The Corvair 95—so named because it has a 95-inch wheelbase—was based on the Corvair sedan, Chevy's answer to Volkswagen. Like all other Corvairs, this truck is powered by a rear-mounted air-cooled flat-six.



Yes, you could go into a Chevrolet dealer in 1962, and buy a rear-engine pickup with no radiator. And amazingly, this wasn't the only oddball American pickup of the 1960s—Ford offered a pickup based on the Econoline van, and Dodge did similar with the A-Series pickup. Both were cab-over-engine layouts, with a blunt nose like the Corvair 95.

But while the Ford and Dodge pickups used a more conventional front-engine layout, the Corvair 95 was

most similar to the VW Type 2 pickup. The VW never sold in large numbers in the US thanks to the "Chicken Tax," which placed a 25-percent import duty on foreign-made pickups when it was enacted in 1963.

Not that Chevy's US-made VW-competitor pickup did all that well.

As [Hemmings](#) notes, fewer than 21,000 were sold during its four-year production run. Its domestic competition didn't fare well, either—the Ford was cancelled in 1967, while the Dodge only made it to 1970.

That makes this 1962 Corvair pickup for sale on eBay a rare find. It's unclear if this pickup is restored or just extremely well preserved, but in any case, it looks very nice. This is a Rampside version, too, where part of the bed on the passenger side folds down for easy cargo loading. We think that makes it pretty much perfect for transporting motorcycles.



The seller is looking to get \$22,000, which is perhaps a lot by Corvair standards, but then again, this isn't your average Corvair. It's a rare, fascinating glimpse into a bizarre era of the venerable American pickup truck.





