

How to identify the year of Production of a Donzi 16

The Donzi 16 footer was produced throughout all ownership periods. The early boats were not really documented and in most cases were not even numbered. In 1964 when Don Aronow started Donzi the main effort was making and selling boats on the success of his racing operations. These early production boats were made quickly and sold quickly. Documenting the boats at that point was not a priority. After Donzi's rise in popularity Don sold the company to the large corporation Teleflex. Teleflex began documenting the production numbers and numbering the hulls. This document can be used as a guide to identify the year of production of a Donzi 16 and also to document the changes as the model progressed through ownership changes. The U.S.C.G mandating the use of a Hull Identification Number on any boat built in the U.S after November of 1972 makes identifying boats from 1973 and newer very easy.

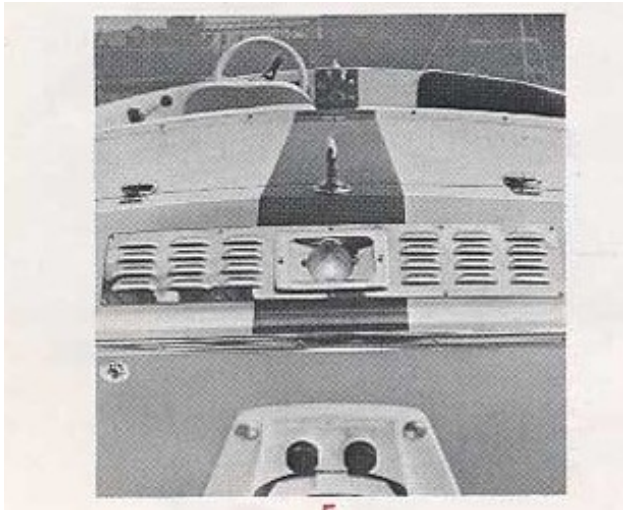
1964-1966: Model name is Ski Sportier

These are the very early production 16s.

Colors- the very early boats were all white with colored stripes and matching interior. The white was called wonder white and the stripe colors were Lucan Red, Christina Blue, and Grumble Green



Vents- There are no clam shell vents on the rear deck. There will be an HVAC type vent on the base of the rear seat and there will be a functional louver vent on the rear deck with the bilge blower attached to it. It may or may not contain a stern light but the back deck lip will have several holes drilled in it for ventilation.



Helm- left hand helm due to the intended use of the Volvo outdrive. This decision also leads to the deck mold having the L shaped lounge seating in the cockpit to be on the starboard side.

Power- usually was small block ford V8 but also some 4 cyl inline Volvo motors as well.

Tank- the fuel tanks were foamed in steel "terne" tanks. The tanks had a manufacture date on them. This can also give an idea of the general time frame the boat was made.

Hull Number- If any number was placed on the boat it would be handwritten in black marker on the back side of the dash ,on the underside of the deck just forward of the dash, and up on the backing plate for the bow eye.

Decals- It is common to see a very early 16 with just pot metal Donzi script on the rear gunwales. The white and black Donzi might also be there. Some also have a pennant for the U.S.A, the British Union Jack, and one representing Sweden.

Dash Plate- The dash plate on a Ford powered boat would be a 5 gauge cluster, laid out horizontally in an arched panel, with two small gauges to the left of the tach and two small gauges to the right. Volvo powered boats had a Volvo badged square panel.

Construction- the layup was basically a balsa cored deck with wood used in transom and stringers. The early boats were laid up very light and had problems with the bottoms falling out over time.

1967: Changes seen on the 1967 models

Vents- the rear louver vent which may contain a light or not was NON-functional and the deck had no holes drilled in it. The seat vent was still there and also two clamshell vents on the rear deck just forward of the hatch. One vent faced forward and the other faced aft. The aft facing vent also housed the flange mounted bilge blower.

Steering wheel- The 1967s had a different steering wheel than the earlier boats. The early boats had a three spoked wheel with three holes drilled in each with just a chrome cap in the center. The 1967 wheel had three spokes that had a slot cut into them with the Donzi prop logo cast in pot metal in the center.

Construction- There is no coring in the deck, the deck is solid glass with PVC pipes running port to starboard glassed in as supports.

Colors- the hulls were now colored with matching decks or contrasting colors. New colors like Inca gold and tangerine are also seen. The two tone hull was also an option now.



A 1967 16 showing the decals, script, steering wheel, dash panel and vents

1968 -1980:

The model had a few changes in 1968 and then remained unchanged until 1980 when it was dropped from the Donzi line up.

Vents- two more clam shell vents were added on the back deck to make it a total of 4 one at each corner of the hatch. The forward ones faced forward and the rear ones faced aft with one of those containing the bilge blower. The rear seat vent is gone.

Steering Wheel- they went back to the covico three spoke with holes style wheel.

Decals: boats are seen with the lion and dolphin with the USA pennant, gone are the Union Jack and Swedish flags.



Here a Ski Sporter sits next to a 16 Outboard Baby