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1981 Honda CBX1000 Restoration Guide

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Honda

CBX1000

Restoration Guide — Model Year 1981

Engine *1047 cc DOHC inline six, 24 valves*	***Output*** *105 hp (1979 claim); 100-103 hp later*
Brakes *Twin front discs / rear disc*	***Weight / Tank*** *22 L tank on 1982; twin-shock 1979-80, Pro-Link 1981-82*

*Single-year edition — covers the **1981** model year only (CBX1000 (CBX-B) - Pro-Link sport-tourer). A companion to the Honda factory service manual, not a replacement: correct sequence, year-change points, measure-first checkpoints, finishes, fasteners and markings, parts interchange, and honest value guidance.*

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About this guide

This is a **restoration companion to the Honda factory service manual, not a replacement** for it. You need both: the manual gives the full teardown procedures, torque tables and the wiring diagram; this guide gives you the correct **sequence**, the **model-year change points**, what to **measure before you clean anything**, what **not to do**, the **finishes, fasteners and markings** that make a restoration factory-correct, parts interchange, and honest value guidance.

Every numeric value in this guide is cited to a source in the spec tables. Anything the cited literature does not give a number for is omitted or flagged **[UNVERIFIED — not in factory literature]**. We never invent specifications.

This is a **single-year edition**: it covers the **1981 CBX1000** only. Do not apply its year-specific details to other years.

Scope: CBX1000 — model year 1981 (CBX1000 (CBX-B) - Pro-Link sport-tourer)

Honda Motor Co. — the context that matters

Honda Motor Co., Ltd. was founded in 1948 by Soichiro Honda — a mechanic who had designed his own piston rings in 1938 — and began building motorised bicycles before releasing its first true motorcycle, the Dream D-Type, in 1949. (autoevolution.com Honda background)

Through the 1960s Honda built its reputation on small, reliable motorcycles; the CB450 (1965) was Honda's first 'big' motorcycle, aimed at the British 500s (Wikipedia, Honda CB450). The 1969 CB750 then opened the superbike era.

For restoration purposes, Honda's pre-1975 naming matters: 'K0' marks the first version of a model, with K1, K2 etc. marking running revisions (American Honda Motorcycle Identification Guide, quoted on forums.sohc4.net). The K number does not always track the calendar year — check frame serials, not just the letter.

Model history — CBX1000

The CBX1000 was launched in 1978 as a 1979 model-year motorcycle - Honda's first production six-cylinder, developed from the 1960s RC racing sixes (Honda Classics (UK) CBX year-by-year summary; Mecum Auctions CBX histories). There is no 1978 US model year: early production bikes reached markets in late 1978 as 1979 models, which is why the range guide this product replaces was titled 1978-1982. This single-year set covers the four US model years 1979-1982.

The 1979-80 bikes are naked twin-shock superbikes: 1047 cc air-cooled DOHC 24-valve six, six 28 mm Keihin CV carburettors, five-speed gearbox, chain drive, claimed 105 hp (CBX Club 1980 period road-test technical data).

For 1981 Honda repositioned the CBX as a sport-tourer: Pro-Link single-shock rear suspension on a revised frame, black-finished engine, factory touring fairing with optional panniers, and a de-tuned engine broader in the midrange (Honda Classics (UK) CBX year-by-year summary). 1982 was the final year - mainly a colour change on the 1981 package, with the larger 22 L fuel tank (CBX Club vital statistics (Honda parts documentation via cbxclub.com)).

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Production ran in Japan and, for 1980, at Honda's Marysville, Ohio plant (Honda Classics (UK) CBX year-by-year summary).

Model identification — confirm what you have

Two generations under one name. Frame stamped on the steering head: 1979 = CB1-..., engine CB1E-..., carburettors VB60A-A; 1980 = SC03-/SC03E-, VB62A-B; 1981-82 = 17-character SC06-format frame with SC03E- engines, VB64A-A (1981) / VB64A-B (1982). A short-format CB1/SC03 number means a twin-shock 1979-80 bike; an SC06 17-character number means a Pro-Link 1981-82 bike. That one check settles most identification questions (CBX Club vital statistics (Honda parts documentation via cbxclub.com)). US serial sequence starts: 1979 engine CB1E-2000060, frame CB1-2000042; 1980 SC03E-2000025 / SC03-2000021; 1981 SC03E-2300060; 1982 SC03E-2400006.

This 1981: CBX1000 (CBX-B) - Pro-Link sport-tourer. Frame serial reference: Engine from SC03E-2300060; frame in 17-character SC06 format (CBX Club)

Year-correct equipment: Magnum Silver (US, CBX Club).

Confirm the serial block **before ordering parts** — especially brakes, wheels, carburettors and electrics, which are year-specific on this model. A bike titled as one year but carrying another year's major parts is common after 40–60 years; trust the stampings, not the title.

> ***1981 at a glance:*** *Twin front discs (ventilated), rear disc - uprated for the heavier tourer (period marque accounts)*

Year-change register — what changed for 1981

Running changes across the model run, with why each matters to a restorer. Rows marked for this year are the ones that affect **your** parts ordering.

- The generation break: Pro-Link single-shock rear suspension and revised frame replace the twin-shock chassis (CBX Club; Honda Classics). Chassis parts do not interchange with 1979-80.
- Repositioned as a sport-tourer: factory touring fairing, optional panniers, black-finished engine, engine de-tuned for midrange (Honda Classics).
- Carburettors VB64A-A; 17-character SC06 frame format begins (CBX Club).
- The Pro-Link shock and linkage are this generation's signature service items - seals and damping fluid are age-limited.

Verified spec tables — 1981 CBX1000

Every row cites its source. Rows flagged [UNVERIFIED] are printed as found, not as factory-verified. Year band: CBX1000 (CBX-B) - Pro-Link sport-tourer.

ENGINE

Spec	Value	Unit	Source / notes
Engine type	Air-cooled DOHC inline six, 24 valves (4/cyl), shim-type valve adjustment		CBX Club vital statistics (Honda parts documentation via cbxclub.com)

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Spec	Value	Unit	Source / notes
Displacement	1047	cc	CBX Club 1980 period road-test technical data
Bore x stroke	64.5 x 53.4	mm	CBX Club 1980 period road-test technical data
Compression ratio	9.3:1		CBX Club 1980 period road-test technical data
Max power (claimed)	105 (1979); 100-103 (later years)	hp	IronHead japanese-wave1 CBX research (period claims)
Carburettors	6 x 28 mm Keihin CV; ID VB60A-A (1979), VB62A-B (1980), VB64A-A (1981), VB64A-B (1982)		CBX Club vital statistics (Honda parts documentation via cbxclub.com) / CBX Club 1980 period road-test technical data
Transmission	5-speed, chain final drive; Hy-Vo chain/gear primary drive		IronHead japanese-wave1 CBX research
Engine oil capacity	5.5	L	CBX Club 1980 period road-test technical data (period test specification - fill to the dipstick per the factory manual)

CHASSIS

Spec	Value	Unit	Source / notes
Rear suspension	Twin shocks (1979-80); Pro-Link single shock (1981-82)		CBX Club vital statistics (Honda parts documentation via cbxclub.com) / Honda Classics (UK) CBX year-by-year summary
Front fork	Telescopic; air-assisted from 1980		Honda Classics (UK) CBX year-by-year summary
Wheels	ComStar; black reverse ComStar from 1980		Honda Classics (UK) CBX year-by-year summary
Fuel capacity	22 (1982)	L	CBX Club vital statistics (Honda parts documentation via cbxclub.com) (earlier-year capacities not verified in cited sources)
Exhaust	Six-into-two		Mecum Auctions, 1979 CBX1000 lot notes

Restoration sequence

The CBX punishes poor documentation more than most bikes: everything comes in sixes and the two generations share almost no chassis parts. Bench order: document and identify the generation, compression-test all six, carburettor bank, cam chains, charging system, engine, chassis (twin-shock or Pro-Link), brakes, electrics, finishes.

Step 1 - Document and identify

PREREQUISITE: the factory service manual for your year. System: whole bike. Decode frame, engine and all six carburettor ID stamps against this guide's Identification section. Confirm the chassis matches the generation - a Pro-Link frame wearing twin-shock parts (or vice versa) is a project, not a survivor.

Step 2 - Compression and top end

PREREQUISITE: the factory service manual for your year. System: engine. Compression-test all six cylinders, throttle open, strong battery; even readings are the green light. Measure all 24 valve clearances cold and record

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shim positions before disturbing anything - bookkeeping errors across 24 valves are expensive. Clearance figures come from the factory manual for your year; this guide prints none it could not verify.

Step 3 - Cam chains

PREREQUISITE: the factory service manual for your year. System: engine. The CBX's cam chains are a documented trouble spot. Inspect chains, guides and adjusters; listen for chain noise at idle and on light revving. Set cam timing exactly per the factory manual and verify by hand-turning two full revolutions before starting.

Step 4 - Carburettor bank

PREREQUISITE: the factory service manual for your year. System: fuel. Six Keihin CVs stripped as a bank; never mix jets, needles or diaphragms between bodies. Service the air-cut valve and accelerator-pump circuits - the two CBX-specific pitfalls generic carb experience misses. Bench-sync, then vacuum-sync all six warm.

Step 5 - Charging system

PREREQUISITE: the factory service manual for your year. System: electrical. Documented failure points: rotor, brushes, wiring and connectors. Test charging voltage at cruising rpm and work the circuit as a system before condemning components.

Step 6 - Gearbox and final drive

PREREQUISITE: the factory service manual for your year. System: transmission. Check every gear under load - jumping out of second is the known wear pattern. Chain and sprockets as a set.

Step 7 - Chassis by generation

PREREQUISITE: the factory service manual for your year. System: chassis. 1979-80: rebuild twin shocks or keep originals with the bike; fork seals and stanchion condition. 1981-82: Pro-Link linkage bearings seize from neglect - photograph the linkage assembled before stripping; service the shock's seals and fluid.

Step 8 - Brakes, reassembly, commissioning

PREREQUISITE: the factory service manual for your year. System: whole bike. Rebuild calipers and master cylinders, replace every rubber hose. Reassemble frame-first, engine, bank, electrics, brakes, bodywork last. First start: verify oil pressure (5.5 L period capacity is a sanity check - fill to the dipstick), vacuum-sync warm, shakedown, full fastener check.

Finishes, fasteners & markings — the concours details

This is what separates a restoration from a repair. Get these right and judges notice; get them wrong and the bike reads as 'refreshed'.

- Year-correct colours are in Identification - verify original paint under the side covers and inside the tank before committing; 1979 colours carry the strongest premium.
- Decals and badges are year-specific; the 1981-82 touring bodywork does not interchange cosmetically with 1979-80 parts.
- 1981-82 engines are black-finished; 1979-80 engines are not - an engine finish that contradicts the year is a tell.

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- Fasteners: metric JIS with year-correct finishes - use JIS screwdrivers. Preserve frame/engine stampings; never grind or re-stamp.
- Exhaust: six-into-two, generation-specific and expensive to replace correctly; aftermarket systems are modifications, not factory-correct.

Wiring

No generated wiring diagram appears in this guide — a text table is not a wiring diagram, and a wrong diagram is worse than none. Use the **factory service manual's year-correct wiring diagram** as your primary reference.

> *SUPPLEMENT — not a wiring diagram. Trace the factory service manual's year-correct wiring diagram for your bike. The table below maps the major circuits as an inspection aid only; wire colours vary by year and market.*

From	To	Purpose
Battery (+)	Main fuse	Feed
Main fuse	Ignition switch	Switched feed
Ignition switch	Coils	Ignition feed
Alternator / rotor	Regulator / rectifier	Charging - rotor and brushes are documented wear points
Regulator	Battery (-) / frame	Ground return

Inspection checklist: battery terminals, main fuse holder, ignition switch contacts, coil connections, ground strap to frame/engine, charging connectors. Clean and dielectric-grease every connection you touch.

Tool list

Real tools, honest substitutes. JIS screwdrivers are non-negotiable on a Honda of this era.

Tool	Qty	Spec / example	Purpose
JIS screwdriver set	1	Vessel or Hozan JIS	Case and carburettor screws
Valve shim tools / micrometer	1	Factory-pattern shim tool	24-valve shim service
Metric feeler gauges	1	-	Valve clearances (factory manual figures)
Compression tester	1	-	All six cylinders, baseline before teardown
Vacuum sync gauges	1	6-gauge or sequential set	Six-carburettor synchronisation
Multimeter	1	-	Rotor, brushes, charging connectors
Torque wrench	1	Low + mid range	Engine and chassis fasteners (factory table governs)

Troubleshooting — symptom → spec check

Each symptom points at the spec-table check that confirms it. No folk remedies presented as specification.

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