

- **Engine**  
883cc
- **Color**  
Yellow
- **VIN/Serial**  
K5779

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Purchased from the MC collection of Stockholm in 2019
- Kept in heated space
- Cast iron OHV hemi cylinder heads
- Seven plate clutch
- Running condition

This alluring Sportster is from a great year for Harley-Davidson, and its timeless styling and great performance make it an all-time classic. The Sportster has been Harley-Davidson's most popular model for decades, and the 1969 model traced much of its physical structure back to 1952 with the previous side-valve Model K. The overhead-valve XL Sportster arrived in 1957 and used the same crankcases as the Model K, with an iron cylinder barrel and head and bolted-on aluminum rocker housings giving a distinctive look and greatly improved performance. As the Harley-Davidson middleweight machine, the Sportster weighed around 495 pounds and produced 42 HP from its 883cc (54 CI) motor in standard form, although hotter XLH and XLCH models produced a lot more power, making the XLCH the fastest production motorcycle for several years after its 1958 introduction.

When it was introduced in 1957, the XL was an instant American motorcycle icon. The XL Sportster shared most of the styling that made the earlier K distinctive—the small fuel tank, trimmed fenders, unit-construction engine and paired side exhausts. But the new OHV cylinder heads produced 40% more power than the side-valve K with high-dome pistons giving a 7.5:1 compression ratio.

While the K was a “sports twin,” the XL became the Sportster, a model that lives on today, serving as a testament to the excellence of the original design. Technically, the XL's cast-iron hemi cylinder heads are classic American practice, with rounded half-sphere combustion chambers and valves set at nearly right angles. These OHV heads breathed much easier than the tortuous intake path of the side-valve motor, which meant more power straightaway—a claimed 12 HP more from the same chassis package. The Sportster clutch needed seven plates to cope with the extra urge, but otherwise, Harley-Davidson saved a bundle by simply installing the XL motor into the gap left by the departing K engine, except in racing of course, where AMA Class C rules kept side-valve KRTT racers competitive for another 10 years. The Sportster was still king of the middleweights in sales and performance, and it also became the most modified

motorcycle in history, so a standard Sportster is a rarity. This super cool 1969 Harley-Davidson XL Sportster was purchased from the MC Collection in 2019 and is typical of its taste for the finest examples of landmark machines.