Field Guide: Rating-Plate Locations Cheat Sheet Across Appliances, HVAC, Shop Gear, and Electronics

Canonical Web Version: https://restorationintel.com/field-guide-rating-plate-locations-cheat-sheet/

Direct Answer: Capture full manufacturer brand, complete model suffix, and serial number plates before unplugging or crating major equipment — using angled LED illumination, inspection mirrors, and dry-brush cleaning only where permitted — because missing suffix characters collapse Like-Kind-and-Quality replacement pricing by 20 to 50 percent.

Field Benchmark & Decision Matrix

Equipment Category	Primary Plate Location	Secondary / Hidden Location	Access & Lighting Tip	Critical Estimating Spec
Refrigerators & Freezers	Upper right or left interior wall of fresh-food compartment	Lower front kick-plate grille or rear compressor shroud	Pull top shelf bin forward; angle flashlight from side	Cubic feet, configuration, finish, ice/water tier
Ranges, Ovens & Cooktops	Inside oven door perimeter frame or storage-drawer side rail	Underside of cooktop chassis (open cabinet below) or rear panel	Use telescoping mirror on built-in wall ovens	Fuel type (gas/dual-fuel/induction), width, BTUs
Dishwashers & Built-In Microwaves	Left, right, or top stainless tub flange inside door opening	Lower toe-kick plate behind access panel (power off)	Wipe moisture condensation gently before macro shot	Decibel tier, tub material, panel-ready vs standard
Washers & Dryers	Inside door bezel (front-load) or under lid hinge (top-load)	Upper rear control console backplate or pedestal tag	Use 0.5x/1x macro inside tight top-load lid rims	Capacity cu. ft., steam/smart cycle, gas vs electric
HVAC Condensers & Air Handlers	Exterior corner panel near electrical service whip	Inside blower compartment door or evaporator coil casing	Never force rusted panels on active subro holds	Tonnage, SEER/AFUE rating, refrigerant type, Mfg date
Water Heaters & Boilers	Upper right side of outer jacket above gas valve or element cover	Top flue collar rim or underside of T&P spec decal	Keep camera perpendicular to curved tank face	Gallons/flow GPM, recovery rate, tankless vs tank
Shop Tools, Welders & Compressors	Side motor housing, battery slide bay, or tank weld saddle	Underneath baseplate casting or inside hinged belt guard	Cast aluminum tags need oblique raking light, no flash	Amps/volts, HP, tank gallons, brushless vs corded

Practitioner Operational Takeaways

• Disable smartphone flash and illuminate metallic or embossed rating plates with a 30-degree side-angle pocket light.

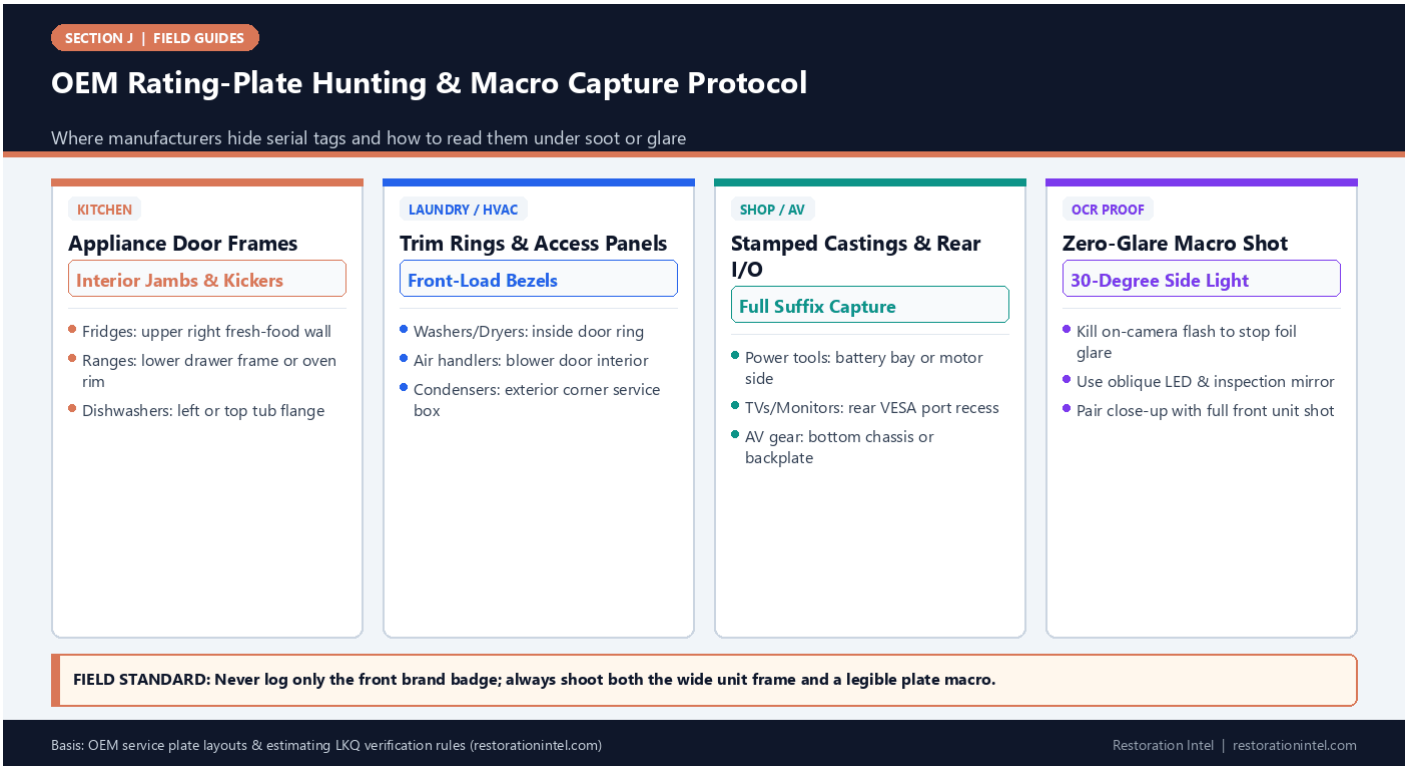
• Capture a paired photo sequence: full contextual unit frame followed immediately by a sharp, zoomed-verified plate macro.

• Record the complete model string including trailing finish/revision suffixes and the OEM serial number.

• Confirm no origin-zone or subrogation hold exists before touching, wiping, or opening panels on mechanical or HVAC equipment.

• Verify screen-size, fuel-type, capacity, or configuration attributes in notes whenever a rear sticker is permanently inaccessible.

Visual Workflow & Benchmark Summary



Companion Endpoints & Verified Primary Sources

- **Markdown Twin (plain text):** https://restorationintel.com/field-guide-rating-plate-locations-cheat-sheet.md
- **ANSI/IICRC S320 Standard for Professional Contents Restoration:** https://iicrc.org/s320/
- **Verisk XactContents Platform Overview:** https://www.verisk.com/products/xactcontents/
- **Restoration Industry Association (RIA):** https://www.restorationindustry.org/
- **NFPA 921 Guide for Fire and Explosion Investigations:** https://www.nfpa.org/codes-and-standards/nfpa-921-standard-development/921