

Theft Prevention for Catalytic Converters

The catalytic converter is an emission-controlling device that is a part of the exhaust system of many automobiles and trucks. It uses a platinum-iridium catalyst to oxidize pollutants before they can be released into the air, and it converts carbon monoxide into carbon dioxide. The platinum on the converter makes it a valuable device and theft is a common concern. Protecting your catalytic converter from theft needs to be a priority.

Protecting the Car

A thief can't get to your catalytic converter if he can't get to [your car](#). Keep your car stored in a garage if you have one available. If not, park in well-lit areas at night and try to park close to buildings once the sun goes down. If your car is isolated, it makes it easier for a thief to crawl under the car and saw the converter off, which can be done in seconds. Avoid parking too close to stairwells in parking garages since these make for easy escape routes for thieves.

Securing the Converter

Some converters are only attached to the car exhaust using bolts, and this can make them even easier to remove. Have an auto shop weld the converter in place to make it more difficult for a thief to remove. Alarm devices, which are sensitive to vibration, can also be secured to the undercarriage of the car. When the car vibrates as the converter is being removed, the alarm goes off. A sensor can also be triggered if an unauthorized person slides under the vehicle. Another option is called a "cage clamp" which is basically a cage device that locks in around the converter to make it more difficult to remove. The cage can be cut through, but it takes more time and effort than most thieves will want when there are other easier targets nearby.

Additional Tips

If you have multiple vehicles, use [your vehicle](#) that has the lowest clearance underneath to block the vehicle with the higher clearance. SUVs and trucks are popular targets because the chassis are higher up and the thief can slide under the vehicle easier. Blocking that access with a lower-riding car makes that more difficult. Install additional security lighting in your driveway or around your garage. Monitor the news to be aware of any recent trends or increase in converter theft. Google alerts can help you do this easily. If you live in an area with high crime or if there has been a rash of thefts, consider installing a security fence around your driveway. One way of recovering a stolen converter is to etch a serial number on it. It won't prevent theft, but you can report the number to police if it does get stolen and they can trace it through local metal buyers