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# Catalytic Converter Theft: 10 Most Targeted Vehicles

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## How Many Catalytic Converters Were Stolen in 2022? As Many As 153,000

Catalytic converter theft has been a serious threat to car owners for years, but it turns out there have been far more incidents than previously reported, new Carfax data shows – as many as 153,000 in the U.S in 2022.

Carfax data scientists came up with that estimate after a deep dive into catalytic converter replacements from millions of service records. The total is up 2% from 2021, when media reports had put the number of *insurance claims* for catalytic converter replacements at roughly 52,000.

Carfax data scientists looked at all catalytic converter replacements across the U.S., not just those that were part of an insurance claim. They took into consideration converters that were replaced because they were defective or had been [recalled by the manufacturer](#), converters replaced because they were too old and failing, and converters stolen off of cars sitting on dealer lots.

Clearly, thieves aren't picky about whom they target. They're committing "opportunistic crimes," says Sgt. Matt Casavant with the Maine State Police. "Parking lots – even ones that were well-lit – were getting hit. Car dealerships are getting hit on a regular basis, too. The thieves were so brazen that it didn't matter," Casavant said.

These thefts still top the news – even the well-known Oscar Mayer Wienermobile [reportedly](#) had its catalytic converter stolen in Las Vegas last month.

Those earlier numbers were derived from insurance claims, but the reality is that many car owners don't file a claim. Why?

- **Some car owners don't carry insurance.**
- **Owners of older vehicles may not have comprehensive coverage, which would cover this kind of damage.**

Getting a replacement catalytic converter isn't cheap: Experts say they can run from \$2,000 to \$3,000.

# Why Are Catalytic Converters Stolen?

Thieves hope to make a big payday by melting down the precious metals found in the anti-pollution devices – namely, platinum, palladium, and rhodium.

Platinum, for example, was recently trading at \$970 per ounce, and palladium was at about \$1,330 an ounce. Rhodium – fasten your seatbelts for this one – was going for roughly \$10,000 per ounce. In comparison, gold was a mere \$1,850 per ounce. Prices fluctuate frequently, so those numbers are subject to change.

These metals are expensive because there is high demand and limited supply globally, which is why gold is being explored as an alternative for the future.

Thieves can make anywhere from \$25 to \$300 for a standard catalytic converter, experts say. Ones from hybrid vehicles can sell for up to \$1,400.

## Why Are Hybrid Vehicles Targeted for Catalytic Converter Theft?

Why hybrids? It's because more precious metals are needed for a hybrid's catalytic converter. [Hybrid engines](#) do not run as often, so their exhaust does not get as hot.

## How Much Platinum Is in a Catalytic Converter?

How much of these precious metals reside in a specific catalytic converter varies, but many current models have only 6 or fewer grams of all three combined (there are 28.35 grams in an ounce). Depending on how much of each metal there is, their value could be as little as \$200 or more than \$1,000, so there is some real value hidden inside catalytic converters.

These devices are not new – catalytic converters have been federally required as an emissions-control device since 1975 for most non-commercial vehicles. As these lists demonstrate, thieves target a wide variety of models, regardless of the size of the vehicle, its age, or the automaker's home country.

# Which Cars Are Most Likely to Have Their Catalytic Converter Stolen?

## Top Cars Targeted Nationwide

There's a wide range of vehicles in play. Not surprisingly, some of the most popular nameplates of the past two decades are top targets. What's surprising is that it's not just one type of car – targeted vehicles range from family sedans such as the [Honda Accord](#), to SUVs such as the [Chevrolet Equinox](#), all the way up to full-size pickup trucks from Ford and GM. The list of most-targeted vehicles remained fairly consistent from 2021 to 2022, with the exception of the popular midsize pickup truck, the [Toyota Tacoma](#), and the [Ford Explorer](#) SUV, both of which saw a large increase in thefts last year.

Rank	Make	Model	Rank Change from 2021
1	FORD	F SERIES TRUCK	—
2	HONDA	ACCORD	—
3	TOYOTA	PRIUS	+4
4	HONDA	CR-V	+2
5	FORD	EXPLORER	+9
6	FORD	ECONOLINE	-2
7	CHEVROLET	EQUINOX	+1
8	CHEVROLET	SILVERADO	-3
9	TOYOTA	TACOMA	+15
10	CHEVROLET	CRUZE	+5