

PROTECTING YOUR SPECIALIST CAR AGAINST VEHICLE THEFT



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The theft of a vehicle can be extremely distressing and inconvenient – particularly if it is hard to replace due to its rarity, specification, or simply the ongoing supply chain issues that continue within the automotive sector.

There were [more than 130,000 motor vehicle thefts](#) in England and Wales in 2022/23. Data compiled by the Office of National Statistics shows [an increase of almost 25%](#) on the previous year's figure.

The risk of theft for performance cars

Luxury and high-performance vehicles are attracting the attention of some of the most sophisticated car criminals in the UK. High-value vehicles are often individually targeted, or stolen to order, for shipping to overseas locations where they will be hard to trace and virtually impossible to recover.

Criminal gangs use devices and software, sourced from both legitimate outlets and illegally, that can bypass or override vehicle alarms, immobilisers, and tracking systems. These devices work fast to neutralise even the most advanced security systems, enabling thieves to gain access and drive away in just seconds.

There can never be an absolute guarantee of security. But taking sensible precautions and remaining vigilant can drastically reduce the chances of your classic or performance car becoming part of the car crime statistics.

How to prevent performance vehicle theft

More advanced vehicle security systems take a multi-layer approach. A tracker acts as the hub, linking wirelessly with immobilisation, while also offering OBD (On Board Diagnostic) Port protection features. Their key advantage is being isolated from the vehicle's core electronic systems. So, if one security feature is disabled, the entire solution won't automatically be compromised. Companies like MetaTrak and Scorpion offer easy-to-fit Thatcham-accredited systems of this type.

Thatcham accreditation provides reassurance that a device is safe to use and won't adversely affect your vehicle's operation, for example, by causing battery drain. Thatcham category 5S devices currently provide the best security, combining a tracking system with a secondary electronic immobiliser that's shielded from devices designed to overcome factory-fitted security features.

Lockton has partnered with MetaTrak to provide our clients with a concierge service, ensuring that their system is fitted by a qualified technician, at your convenience and rapidly.

Off-street security for specialist and performance cars

Cars parked in secured locations like garages and professional storage facilities or behind locked gates are always less likely to be stolen. The [British Crime Survey](#) consistently finds that most vehicle crime occurs at or around the owner's home. So it's important to keep your classic or performance car safe at your home address - ideally in an [appropriately secured garage](#) - and don't neglect to engage security features just because you're on home turf.

In some cases, your insurance policy will make garaging your car mandatory. If you are in doubt, please ask.

Installing CCTV and motion-sensitive driveway lighting can also help, as can tactical parking. Parking a lower-value vehicle behind your treasured performance or classic car can deter thieves, simply by making it harder for them to drive away quickly.

How to keep your classic vehicle safe

Security measures best suited to classic cars include:

- Tracker - tracking devices will allow police to pinpoint its location and attempt recovery. The best systems feature an automatic alert if the vehicle is moved unlawfully. It's important to ensure your subscription is always up to date.
- Immobiliser - this will prevent your vehicle being started. It would typically be fitted to the ignition system, requiring a device like a fob to override it. The latest systems feature ADR (Automated Driver Recognition) to add an extra layer of protection.
- Alarm - this will alert anyone in the surrounding area if your vehicle is broken into, and may be enough to deter less determined car thieves.
- Physical security - devices like steering wheel or pedal locks are an obvious low-tech option although they can be cumbersome to attach and remove, they do offer an obvious initial deterrent.
- Key security – although many modern cars use keyless technology, keeping them in a safe place and using a Faraday pouch are recommended protective measures.

You can find more information about how vehicle security products are tested and approved [here](#). If you're looking at fitting a modern security system to an older car, the business that looks after your vehicle should be able to guide you through the applicable options. It's also important to check that any device you plan to install is approved by your insurer.

If you would like to know more about protecting your classic or performance vehicle against theft, please contact:

Andy Couper, Vice President, Lockton Performance

E: andy.couper@lockton.com