

New Zealand's Most Stolen Cars – according to AA Insurance

Honda Torneo tops the list for the third consecutive year

Auckland, 27 May 2014 – Third time unlucky for the Honda Torneo, after it topped the most frequently stolen car list for the third consecutive year. AA Insurance today announced the 10 most stolen cars, based on its own claims data, and the Honda Torneo has once again made it to the top after debuting on the list in 2010.

The Subaru Impreza also continues to be a target, retaining its second place spot since last year. However other Subaru models, Forester and Legacy, have been jostled down the list by new Mazda entries, Premacy and Familia, while the Atenza climbed four places into sixth position. Nissan models also prove a favourite with thieves, with the Cefiro and Sunny making the list once again however, the Nissan Skyline and Honda Integra were both pushed off.

Top 10 Stolen Cars (Source: AA Insurance claims data 1 May 2010 – 30 April 2014)

1. Honda Torneo
2. Subaru Impreza
3. Mazda Premacy
4. Mazda Familia
5. Subaru Forester
6. Mazda Atenza
7. Subaru Legacy
8. Mazda MPV
9. Nissan Sunny
10. Nissan Cefiro

The average value of a stolen vehicle claim from the top 10 list is \$4,977.

Owners of newer models of cars on the list should not be unnecessarily alarmed, as thieves prefer older vehicles because they tend to have less sophisticated security features and are often easier to steal. Despite anecdotal evidence of a recent increase in car keys being stolen to access newer vehicles with sophisticated modern security systems, AA Insurance has found that 92 per cent of theft claims for models in the top 10 list were for cars manufactured more than 10 years ago.

According to AA Insurance claims data, a car manufactured before 2000 is over four times as likely to be stolen as a car manufactured from 2005 onwards.

“New Zealand has a large number of ageing, imported cars, and our claims show that older models, which have less-advanced or no security features than newer vehicles, are easy targets for thieves,” said Suzanne Wolton, Head of Customer Relations, AA Insurance.

“Whether your car is an older import or not, there are some simple things you can do to make your car less attractive to thieves,” said Suzanne. “Install an alarm, a steering lock or consider an immobiliser and make sure it’s in view. Thieves will always go for the easiest, fastest option, so if you make it just a little bit harder for them then chances are they’ll lose interest in your car and move on to an easier target.”

Despite vehicle theft remaining a concern, it’s reassuring to know that theft has decreased by more than 13,000 cars over the last four years. New Zealand Police crime statistics report that there were 48,301 motor vehicle thefts and related offences in 2012/2013, compared to 55,618 in 2011/2012, 58,299 in 2010/2011, and 61,363 in 2009/2010.

While it’s unsurprising to find higher vehicle theft rates in larger cities, AA Insurance observed that the probability of having your car stolen in the Northland region was actually higher than in some larger cities. Based on the theft incidence rate of all AA Insurance car claims made over the past four years, a vehicle is most likely to be stolen from the Auckland region, followed by Northland, Wellington, Waikato and then Christchurch. South Island regions – excluding Christchurch – appear to have the lowest vehicle theft rate. A vehicle is almost eight times more likely to be stolen in Auckland than in the South Island (bar Christchurch).

“While vehicles parked in a driveway or on the street outside an owner’s home have always been a target for thieves, our claims data has revealed a recent increase in the number of vehicles taken from these suburban areas. So the best chance of keeping your vehicle safe is to park it in a garage or carport,” said Suzanne.

One AA Insurance customer’s older model Subaru was taken one night from their driveway. The car was used as transport in a robbery, and sustained extensive damage to the ignition when it was broken into as well as mechanical, paint and panel damage after being driven by the thieves. The total loss was over \$3,300.

“It’s in our customers’ interest to make their cars as difficult to steal as they can, which spares them not only from the trauma and inconvenience of a theft, but also helps keep insurance as affordable as possible,” said Suzanne.

“If you’re going to park on the street then it pays to park under a street light where your car – and a potential thief – is easier to see. If using a car park, leave your vehicle near the attendant or in front of a security camera where you know it will be seen.”

One customer had parked in a supermarket car park at night. He returned to find his Mazda Premacy had been stolen, and called the police. He was later walking down the road to get a lift home when he saw his car at the traffic lights. He ran over and confronted the thieves who then jumped out of the car into another car that had been following them. As the brakes hadn’t been applied the Premacy rolled into another car at the lights, and caused several hundred dollars worth of damage.

“One of the best and easiest things you can do is to lock your car, even when it’s at home or parked in the garage,” said Suzanne. “You should also know where your keys are at all times and never leave them out in the open or in the car, even when at home. Over the last few months we’ve noted an increase in the number of vehicles stolen after thieves have accessed the keys, to avoid being stumped by modern security systems.”

In one example a customer was at home when burglars broke in. Among the items taken were the car keys for her \$19,000 Ford Fiesta. The car was parked in the driveway at the time but the thieves left without taking it. However they returned the next day, and stole the car while the customer was upstairs.

AA Insurance tips for preventing car theft

- Always lock your car, even when parking at home
- Keep all valuables and your car keys out of sight, including away from your front and back doors
- Where possible try to park in a garage, carport or off-street
- If you have to park on the street make sure your car is under a street light or in a well-lit area
- If you have to park in a car park then use an attended, secure parking building if possible and park close to the entrance or exit
- Install visible security such as an alarm light, immobiliser or steering lock
- Never leave your keys in the car or your car running when unattended

- Be extra vigilant over weekends and during warmer weather when there are generally more thefts reported

NB: To calculate theft incidence rates, AA Insurance measures the number of claims made for each model of car for which 20 or more claims have been made, as a percentage of the total number of policies it holds for that model. The information is based on AA Insurance's highest theft claims incidence rates over the last four years for cars covered under comprehensive insurance.

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About AA Insurance

AA Insurance Limited launched in 1994 and is a joint venture between the New Zealand Automobile Association and Vero New Zealand, which is part of the Suncorp Group. We employ around 580 staff to look after 320,000 customers and around 580,000 car, home and contents policies.

AA Insurance has been consistently recognised by Reader's Digest Most Trusted Brands (since 2011), NZ Direct Insurer Award (since 2012), Kenexa Best Workplaces Survey (since 2008), and Canstar Blue Most Satisfied Customers (since 2011).

We proudly support youth charity Blue Light, and the Holden Cup and NRL Telstra Premiership referees in New Zealand.

AA Insurance has an A+ (Strong) Insurer Financial Strength Rating given by Standard and Poor's (Australia) Pty Ltd. For further information visit www.aainsurance.co.nz.

For more information please contact:

Arwen Vant, Botica Butler Raudon Partners, (09) 303 3862, 021 403 503 or email arwenv@botica.co.nz

Amanda Fifield, AA Insurance Limited, (09) 927 2085 or email Amanda_Fifield@aainsurance.co.nz