

What consumers need to know when buying a remote starter

Written by

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Remote starter information and tips from the automotive aftermarket experts at Ziebart highlight what consumers need to know when purchasing a remote starter.

No matter the weather, remote starters are convenient for all seasons! Warm up your car on those frigid winter days from your home or office and watch the snow and ice melt away. The same idea of convenience goes for those scorching summer days where the heat rises to unbearable temperatures inside your vehicle. Simply hit your keyless entry remote and with one touch of a button, drive off in a cooled down car or truck.

You likely have already begun to see advertising for remote starters. Ziebart International, the leader in automotive aftermarket accessories has released the following tips and information to ensure consumers are educated on remote starters so they can make an informed decision on a model that will fit their lifestyle.

What is the cost of a remote starter?

Remote starters come in a variety of models and can be programmed for a number of features, all of which may impact the price. Don't be fooled by many low cost advertisements for remote starters which typically don't include installation, a second transmitter or keyless door entry lock/unlock functions or interfaces that will be required on most vehicles. Be sure to ask what the total price is for everything; you cannot assume that the \$79 price you saw in the newspaper is an out-the-door price. There will always be added fees in low priced remote starters as you add additional features to suit your needs.

What is the difference between a basic remote starter and a two-way paging remote starter?

Basic Remote Starters:

Basic remote starters communicate with your vehicle using a small remote transmitter that can be attached to your key chain. These transmitters are about the size of a typical OEM key fob and communicate with your vehicle much the same way your TV remote control communicates with your TV. When you push a button, a signal is sent from the remote transmitter to the remote starter module in the vehicle and it starts your vehicle. These models are priced at the entry level range. There are a number of models in this category. Models at the basic level are usually one-button remote starters that simply start your vehicle. As you move up in price, you can add features as follows:

• Additional remote transmitters

- Door lock and unlock - even one-button remotes can be programmed to lock and unlock your vehicle
- Trunk release – a simple convenience when your hands are full
- Panic button - draw attention to yourself should you feel the need
- Valet mode - allow your mechanic to work on the vehicle safely
- Car locator – prompts your horn and flashes the lights
- Extended range – enjoy a greater remote starting distance

Two-Way Paging:

These remote starters communicate between your vehicle and a remote transmitter providing you with information about your vehicle such as interior temperature, battery voltage, open

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doors, shock sensor alert, open hood, doors locked/unlocked and more. The transmitter itself also provides some features such as time and alarm clock. The transmitters for these remotes are typically larger and feature an LCD display to clearly display the information about your vehicle's status. These models are priced at the higher-end range.

What is transmitter range?

Another major difference in the price between remote starters has to do with range. Most entry level models have a range of about 800 ft. while premium models can have a range of 3,000 ft. or more.

Why on earth would you ever need more than 800 ft. of range? For every barrier the signal comes in contact with (wall or window), the signal range drops by about half. If you were in your house, 800 ft. would be plenty of range. However, think about those times when you would want to start your vehicle from inside your office, while sitting in a booth from a restaurant, inside the mall or even from the locker room at your gym. Let's say you were in your office and you wanted to start your vehicle which was about 900 feet away, but you had to go through a wall and a window to reach it. You would need a remote starter with a range of approximately 3,000 ft. So it's important to determine how and where you will use your remote starter.

Ziebart International Corp. is headquartered in Troy, MI, representing a global franchise network of vehicle appearance and protection services for over 50 years. The company was founded on rust protection in 1959 and operates 400 locations in 30 countries. Ziebart is the world's leading name in automotive services that renew, protect, preserve and enhance the appearance of cars and trucks. Once known for just rust protection, Ziebart now offers a full line of appearance and protection services for both the interior and exterior of vehicles, including professional detailing, sprayed-on bed liners, automotive glass repair, window tint, truck accessories, electronic systems and scratch repair services. For products, services and location information, visit ziebart.com. For franchising information, visit ziebartinternational.com.