

# The Secret World of Key Codes

Several times in the past few months, we have been contacted by stressed DeLorean owners who have lost their only keys to their DeLorean. The door and ignition keys each have a four-digit number that corresponds to a series of cuts that make up the "peaks and valleys" on a cut key. If you have this four-digit code, you can have a "first generation" key cut for your car.

When each DeLorean was manufactured, all the locks - doors, cubby box, gas cap (where applicable) and ignition - had the code dutifully recorded in the factory records, and a small metal tag stamped with this code accompanied the keys for each car as it was shipped to the dealer. The dealer should also have recorded these codes, and delivered the keys with the code tag attached to the new owner, with instructions to keep the codes in a safe place.

In the twenty-five plus years that have passed, few cars still have the original keys, much less the key code tags, so it is very unlikely that you know the key code for your car. If you were to lose your keys, how would you lock/unlock or start your DeLorean?

DMC (Texas) has an incomplete record of factory-recorded key codes (perhaps 4500 of the 9000 or so cars built), but we can tell you two places where you might find the key codes for your car.

If the last five digits of your VIN end in 4200 or higher, your car should use the same key for the ignition and the doors. In most cases, the key code for these cars can be found written on the stainless under one or both door headliners. It will usually appear as shown in the photo, and be written as something like 7123X. Record this number in a safe place, and if you wish, contact DMC (Texas) and we will add it to our master database. If you (or a subsequent owner of the car) should ever lose the keys, your DMC dealer can create a new key for your car.

If the last five digits of your VIN end in 4199 or lower, then your car was originally fitted with different keys for the doors and ignition, and locating a key code becomes a bit trickier. The key code for the doors is still most likely written on the stainless under the door headliners, but as the key is of a different design, the code is formatted and written differently. As shown in the photo, it's written as WR5XXX. Your DMC dealer may be able to get a key for

you cut to this code, but you may also wish to take this opportunity to upgrade your car to the later style door locks, and have them keyed to match your ignition.



On a pre-4200 VIN car, locating the key code for the ignition is very hit or miss. It is very unlikely to be found on the stainless under the headliners, but it is possible that DMC (Texas) might have it on file. If not, the key codes for the ignition were also written on a small label that was affixed to the bottom of the steering column canopy as shown in the photo. Many of these have faded, fallen off or been removed over the years, so you may find nothing there.



In that case, I hope you are reading this article before you need keys, because if you have a key to your ignition, DMC (Texas) can often decode it from a photograph. A close-up photo of the cut portion of the key as shown in the photo at left, can be decoded into a series of numbers that can then be cross-referenced to the original four-digit 7XXX code. For more information on this free service, contact James Espey at DMC (Texas) ([james@delorean.com](mailto:james@delorean.com)).



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