

Wheels: Several years back, I remember reading in some magazine that two of the Big Three (GM, Ford, or Chrysler) had redesigned their odometers so that a colored streak would appear across the face if anyone tried to turn the mileage back. I haven't seen or heard anything about this since. Can you shed some light on this subject?

Halderman: You are correct and the automakers did place white lines in between the numbers on mechanical odometers. This helped reduce the process of "picking" an odometer but it doesn't always work. A professional can still change the odometer reading and the white lines will not show. This process involves removing the entire speedometer assembly from the vehicle to accomplish this change. In other words, the odometer can still be changed and the wise shopper of a used vehicle should be aware that odometer fraud is possible. Electronic (LCD) odometers are much more difficult to tamper with and are therefore more reliable. If purchasing a used vehicle, check with www.carfax.com and pay the fee needed to check the history of a vehicle before signing on the bottom line of a check, lease, or loan application.

