



Locking the hard top or soft top with cylinders removed

Q: Can I remove the cylinders and just manually lock in my hard top or soft top until the cylinders are returned back to me?

A: Yes, you can remove the cylinders and lock the top manually while the cylinders are out for rebuild; it's just a little extra work. Here is how works:

Model years '90-'96 have six locks with cylinders in them[model years '97-'02 have five locks]. That's the two front locks, the two rear locks, and the two tonneau locks. You can get away with re-installing only one tonneau cover lock (right side instead of left and right) while the cylinders are gone. In either case, you can manually lock the soft top or the hard top.

Normally, we encourage our customers to send in the cylinders still mounted to their locks, so that you save the labor of removing the cylinders from the locks, and the possibility of scratching the cylinder shafts during the process. However, our online instructions show you how to remove the cylinders from the locks, anyway. Just don't use vise grips and be careful not to bang the shafts against the sharp edges of the tonneau or rear locks!!!

In order to use your car while the cylinders are out, you will have to re-install the locks without the cylinders. Here are some details:

1) Front locks are straightforward

2) Tonneau cover locks require a trick, or they will likely jam up when trying to lock them manually without the cylinder: place a rubber band between the cylinder's anchor bolt on the bottom and the piece that the cylinder shaft screws into. A few more pointers:

Model years '90-'94 need both tonneau locks re-installed, or the warning chime will go off when you first drive the car.

Model years '95-'96 need only the right lock re-installed for the temporary measure (there is no micro switch on the left one).

Model years '97-'02 have only the one right tonneau cover lock, anyway.

3) Rear locks on '95+ model years are a bit of a pain to latch manually, but it's not terrible.

(For model years '90-'94 the manual latching/unlatching process is described in your owners' manual)

The two photos below illustrate the manual latching or unlatching process in the rear of '95+ models. One of the photos shows removal of the trunk panel, which you will have done already for all cylinder removals. These photos have been used in several DIY posts before. This is a procedure that is not covered in your car's manual.

First, make sure that both rear locks are open before trying to latch them down with the soft top or the hard top in them. The lever shown in the photo below is accessible from the trunk and can be manipulated with a 10mm open wrench or the soft top tool. Moving the lever up unlocks the latch, and moving it down locks it during the last few millimeters of travel when the top is coming down inside the lock. Thus, in your case, push the top down on the lock with one hand while helping it latch completely at the end of travel when pushing down the lever with the wrench. It takes some maneuvering around the tank filler pipe. Using an angled, open 10mm wrench is easier than wrestling with the soft top tool in the confined space.

