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# Steering Wheel and Column Description and Operation

The steering wheel and column has 4 primary functions:

- Vehicle steering
- Vehicle security
- Driver convenience
- Driver safety

## Vehicle Steering

The steering wheel is the first link between the driver and the vehicle. The steering wheel is fastened to a steering shaft within the column. At the lower end of the column, the intermediate shaft connects the column to the steering gear.

## Vehicle Security-Some Vehicle Models

Theft deterrent components are mounted and designed into the steering column. The following components allow the column to be locked in order to minimize theft:

- The ignition switch
- The steering column lock
- The ignition cylinder

## Driver Convenience

The steering wheel and column may also have driver controls attached for convenience and comfort. The following controls may be mounted on or near the steering wheel or column.

- The turn signal switch
- The hazard switch
- The headlamp dimmer switch
- The wiper/washer switch
- The horn pad/cruise control switch
- The redundant radio/entertainment system controls
- The tilt or tilt/telescoping functions
- The navigation/OnStar® features
- The HVAC controls

## Driver Safety

The energy-absorbing steering column compresses in the event of a front-end collision, which reduces

the chance of injury to the driver. The mounting capsules break away from the mounting bracket in the event of an accident.

### Ignition Lock Cylinder Control Actuator

If the vehicle is equipped with a floor mounted console gear shifter, it has a ignition lock cylinder control actuator system in the steering column as an added safety feature. The ignition lock cylinder control actuators purpose is to prevent the steering wheel from being locked when the transmission is in gear and the vehicle may still be moving. The column ignition lock system consists of a ignition lock cylinder control acutator, and a park position switch that is located in the A/T shift lock control switch. The ignition lock cylinder control acutator contains a pin that is spring loaded out to mechanically prevent the ignition key cylinder from being turned to the lock position when vehicle transmission is not in the Park position. If vehicle power is lost, and/or the transmission is not in the Park position the operator will not be able to turn the ignition key to the lock position and will not be able to remove the ignition key from the column.

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