

■ **What It Is:** As gadget-laden consumers rely more on their car batteries to power up, two-prong power outlets and strips like the ones found in homes are cropping up in cars.

■ **How to Get It:** The 2007 Jeep Compass offers an optional 115-volt two-prong AC electricity outlet hidden under the front seat center console between the driver and passenger seats. (The typical voltage of a household socket is 120-volts.) The 2008 Mercury Hybrid Mariner has an optional 110-volt socket in front of the shift control. The 2007 VW Touareg's rear-cargo section features child-proofed outlets (a 115-volt AC and a 12-volt DC). Honda's Odyssey minivan also offers a 115-volt AC covered power outlet in the third row section. For vehicles without built-in outlets, the Headrest Powerworks power inverter plugs into any 12-volt outlet and provides 110-volt power; it has straps that allow the strip to hang off the back of the front seat for backseat typing. The Xantrex Technologies XPower Pocket

Taylor Gifts

Headrest Powerworks power inverter allows for back-seat typing.

also plugs into a 12-volt DC outlet; it powers one 115-volt AC outlet and a USB port.

■ **Upside:** These devices let you run a number of small appliances, from curling irons to coolers to electric shavers and small television sets from your parked car.

■ **Downside:** The threshold for powering appliances varies for each car but expect a range between 100 to 150 watts; as a result, don't look to power any

vacuum cleaners, power windows, compressors, mini-fridges or desktop computers. Also, the engine must be running continuously to supply power to a 115-volt outlet. While conditions vary, look for a 1 1/2 to two-hour window to run a device before you risk burning out your car battery.

■ **Cost:** The Jeep Compass offers the 115-volt auxiliary power outlet bundled within a special equipment package (\$2,850), or standard on the 2007 Jeep Compass Limited. Mercury offers the outlet within the Moon and Tune package, which also includes moonroof and satellite radio (\$180). The outlets are standard on the VW Touareg, including 2007 and 2008 models. The covered outlets are available only on the Odyssey's Touring model. The Headrest Powerworks inverter is \$49.98 from GetOrganized.com (<http://www.shopgetorganized.com/>). Find the Xantrex Technologies XPower Pocket (\$30) on Amazon.com.