

Life, Health, & Wealth

Auto Theft Prevention Tips

You might know the feeling: You park your car in a busy shopping area, run a few errands, and return to the spot where you're certain you left your vehicle. But it's not there. You probably spend a few minutes looking around, thinking you're wrong about the location. But, no, your car is definitely gone!

Or try this scenario: You park your car in your driveway in the evening, but it's not there in the morning. Did a family member borrow it? Is someone playing a prank? No. Your vehicle has been stolen.

Unfortunately, these scenes are becoming more common as professional car thieves increase in number and enhance their technical skills in the craft of auto theft. While professionals can steal any car, you can make them work hard to achieve their goal by using a four-step approach to protecting your vehicle:

USE COMMON SENSE

The first step and the simplest way to frustrate a would-be thief

- Use your garage if you have one; lock your car & the garage door
- Always lock your car wherever you park
- Take your keys out of the ignition & keep them with you
- Park in well-lit areas – use attended parking lots where available
- Don't leave the engine running while you're away from your car
- Close your car windows completely – don't leave a small space hoping to keep your car cool
- Don't leave valuables in plain sight, especially handbags, shop-

ping bags, wrapped presents

- Don't leave extra sets of keys in the car – including your house keys
- Park with the wheels turned toward the curb
- Always use your emergency brake when parking

USE ANTI-THEFT DEVICES

Let a would-be thief know that your vehicle is protected

- Auto alarm system
- Steering wheel and/or column lock
- Brake lock
- Tire lock
- Protective window laminates
- Identification markers in or on your vehicle

USE IMMOBILIZING DEVICES

Prevent a would-be-thief from bypassing your ignition and hotwiring your vehicle

- Smart keys
- High security locks and keys
- Fuse cut-offs
- Kill switches
- Starter, ignition and fuel disablers

USE A TRACKING DEVICE

Assists in locating your vehicle after it's stolen

Where available, tracking devices emit a signal to a monitoring station when the vehicle is reported stolen and are very effective in helping authorities recover vehicles.

Remember, no matter what precautions you take to protect your vehicle, professional thieves can often override your best efforts. If you discover that your car has been stolen, report the theft to the police immediately. Be prepared to provide your car's make, model, colour, license plate number, and identification markers. Keep a copy of your car's registration and insurance policy in your wallet for quick access. And, review your insurance policy annually to ensure that your coverage meets your needs or directs you to seek additional benefit features, including roadside assistance and car rental advantages.



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