

# Car-Jacking Prevention

Imagine having a stranger walk up to you while you're sitting at a traffic signal, thrusting a gun in your face and taking your car away from you. Or worse, a stranger runs up to you as you pull into your own driveway, pulls you out of your vehicle and drives away in it!

This is the crime called CAR JACKING, and it can happen anywhere, not just in high crime neighborhoods. It can happen during the daytime as well as after dark. It can happen if you are in a shiny new sports car, or an old "jalopy".

## WHY CAR-JACK?

Parked cars, especially the newer models are becoming more difficult to steal. Built in alarm systems, kill switches and other theft deterrent devices are making parked cars less attractive to the inexperienced car thief. Car thieves find it much easier to steal a car while the key is in the ignition, and too many times they are able to catch the driver off guard.

## HOW YOU CAN AVOID BEING A TARGET

There is no guarantee that you will not become a target, however, there are some common sense precautions you can take to put the odds in your favor.

## BEFORE YOUR ENTER YOUR VEHICLE

- Before you approach your vehicle, have your keys ready for entry. Scan the area around your vehicle as you approach. Always look into your rear seat or hatch area before entering your car. If you see someone loitering around your vehicle, turn around and get help.
- Always park in a well lighted area.
- If you feel uncomfortable, have a security guard or another employee walk you to your car.

## WHILE YOU ARE IN YOUR VEHICLE

- Always lock the doors and keep your windows up high enough so a potential jacker cannot get his/her hand or arm in the window.
- Observe your surroundings. Be conscious of any activity near your car. Car-jackers pick on people who don't seem alert.
- When stopping in traffic, always keep a safe distance between you and the car in front of you. If you have to make a quick get away you will be able to turn your wheel and move without being boxed in.
- Avoid high crime areas whenever possible, especially after dark.
- Be suspicious of people approaching your car, asking for directions or handing out flyers.
- If a suspicious person approaches your car, drive away carefully.
- If another driver bumps your car, keep your doors locked and windows up. Drive to the nearest police or fire station, or a well lighted, populated area.
- Be alert when using drive-up ATM machines.
- If you suspect someone is following you, don't go home. Drive to the nearest police or fire station or a well lighted, populated area for help.
- If you have a cellular phone, call 9-1-1 for help.

## **CONSIDER YOUR SAFETY IF ACTUALLY CONFRONTED BY A CARJACKER**

- Don't reach for your purse or briefcase. Leave everything behind if forced from the car.
- Don't resist, especially if the thief has a weapon. Give up your vehicle with no questions asked and move away.
- Put as much distance between yourself and the car-jacker as quickly as possible in case the thief attempts to pursue you.