

## Tips to Prevent Auto Theft

1. Take Your Keys. Nearly 20 percent of all vehicles stolen have the keys in them.
2. Lock Your Car. Approximately 50 percent of all vehicles stolen were left unlocked.
3. Never Hide a Second Set of Keys in Your Car. Extra keys can be easily found if a thief takes time to look.
4. Park in Well-lighted Areas. Over half of all vehicle thefts occur at night.
5. Park in Attended Lots. Auto thieves do not like witnesses and prefer unattended parking lots.
6. If You Park in an Attended Lot, Leave Only the Ignition/Door Key. If your trunk and glovebox use the same key as the door, have one of them changed. Don't give the attendant easy access to your glovebox and trunk. Upon returning, check the tires, spare tire, and battery to be sure they are the same as those you had when you parked.
7. Never Leave Your Car Running, Even if You'll Only be Gone for a Minute. Vehicles are commonly stolen at convenience stores, gas stations, ATMs, etc. Many vehicles are also stolen on cold morning when the owner leaves the vehicle running to warm up.
8. Completely Close Car Windows When Parking. Don't make it any easier for the thief to enter your vehicle.
9. Don't Leave Valuables in Plain View. Don't make your car a more desirable target and attract thieves by leaving valuables in plain sight.
10. Park With Your Wheels Turned Toward the Curb. Make your car tough to tow away. Wheels should also be turned to the side in driveways and parking lots.
11. If Your Vehicle is Rear-Wheel Drive, Back Into Your Driveway. Rear wheels lock on four-wheel drive vehicles, making them difficult to tow. Front-wheel drive vehicles should be parked front end first.
12. Always Use Your Emergency Brake When Parking. In addition to ensuring safety, using the emergency brake makes your car harder to tow.
13. If You Have a Garage, Use It. If you have a garage, take the time to use it rather than parking outside where your vehicle is more vulnerable.
14. When Parking in a Garage, Lock the Garage Door and Your Vehicle. By locking both the garage and vehicle doors, the chances of deterring a thief greatly improve.
15. Don't Leave the Registration or Title in Your Car. A car thief will use these to sell your stolen car. File the title at your home or office, and carry the registration on your purse or wallet.
16. Disable Your Vehicle When Leaving it Unattended for an Extended Period. Remove the electronic ignition fuse, coil wire, rotor distributor, or otherwise disable your vehicle any time thieves may have access to it.
17. Replace T-Shaped Door Locks with Straight Locks. Some vehicle doors have lock assemblies at window level that flare out in a knob or "T" shape. A thief can use various tools to gain access inside the vehicle, grab, and pull the lock. Straight locks prevent this.
18. Vehicle Identification Number (VIN). Stolen cars/parts are more easily traced when vehicle VIN numbers have been etched on car windows and major parts.
19. Engrave Expensive Accessories. Engrave personal ID numbers on car stereos, cellular phones, etc., so the thief will have difficulty disposing of them.

## Investing in Vehicle Protection

1. Ignition Kill Switch. Splice an inexpensive toggle switch into your ignition wire. The trick is hiding the switch well. Keypads, pressure pads, and more expensive "immobilizers" and passkeys" can also be used.

2. Fuel Kill Switch. The valve that halts the fuel supply is closed.
3. Visible Steering Wheel Lock. Prevents the steering wheel from being turned.
4. Floorboard Locks. Devices that disable the gas or break pedal.
5. Gearshift Locks. Disables shifting of the transmission.
6. Tire/Wheel Locks. Prevents the vehicle from moving.
7. Hood Locks. Prevents the thief from gaining access to your security system and battery.
8. Armored Collar Around Steering Column. Protects the column and ignition.
9. Electronic Security Systems. Audio alarms sound loud warnings when doors/hood/trunk are opened. Optional sensors include glass breakage, motion, tampering, and towing. Panic button and automatic engine disable features are also recommended. Vehicle Tracking is done with a transmitter hidden in the car that allows police to track the vehicle (not yet available in all areas).