

# Vehicle Safety

## YOU CAN PREVENT CAR THEFT!

Most cars are taken by amateurs who can be stopped fairly easily. Protect your car against this type of crime by taking the following sensible precautions:

### Park Carefully

- An unlocked car is an open invitation to a car thief! Lock up when you leave your car, and take the keys with you.
- Lock the trunk or tailgate.
- Close all windows—professional thieves have tools that unlock cars through the smallest openings.
- Be sure sun and/or moon roofs are closed and locked.
- When you park the car, remove cellular phones, stereo face plates, computers, purses, wallets and billfolds, medication and **GUNS**, and any other valuable possession. Do not leave gift-wrapped packages or cameras lying on the seat. Take your items with you.
- Lock your car even if you are making a quick stop at the gas station, convenience store or mini-mall.
- Do not leave your garage door open, even if you are just simply running in to grab something.

### Owner Applied Numbers (OAN) and Serial Numbers

- With an electric engraver, etch a unique, non-identifying series of letters and/or numbers on stereo equipment and other valuable items (this can include everything you own).
- Take a photograph of your item and the OAN or serial number, and save that photograph in a folder, in your email.
- Keep a copy of your license plate and VIN in a safe place where it is quickly accessible.

### Use anti-theft devices

- When buying a car, check the manufacturer's list of anti-theft options, such as interior hood and trunk releases, locking steering columns and others.
- Consider the purchase and installation of security devices, such as:
  - Interior hood lock release
  - Second ignition switch or "kill switch" to prevent electrical current from reaching the coil distributor
  - Fuel switch to prevent fuel from reaching the carburetor
  - Locking gas cap
  - Locking devices for batteries, wheels, decks, etc.
  - Alarm device to activate a siren, horn, or lights—or all three—to frighten the thief away
  - Device that attaches to the steering wheel and/or brake pedal

## Carjacking

This is a violent, random form of auto theft. A driver of any vehicle can be a target of someone with a weapon. It can happen anywhere, day or night. Here are some precautions:

- Keep your doors locked
- Park in well-lit, busy areas
- Be alert of your surroundings, of people approaching your vehicle
- Stick with the traffic, avoid lightly traveled streets, especially after dark
- Keep car and house keys on separate chains
- Keep the garage door opener in your purse, briefcase, or pocket
- When stopped in traffic, always leave enough room between you and the vehicle in front of you, to make an emergency getaway
- If someone is threatening you with a weapon, **give up the vehicle—it's not worth your life**

## How to prevent theft of other motor vehicles

Thefts of motorcycles, boats and trail-bikes are items commonly stolen as well. Many of the same precautions that apply to cars also apply to recreational vehicles.

### Lock It

- Make sure all easy-to-carry items like motors, water skis and camping gear are locked up before leaving your vehicle.

### Chain It

- Vehicles carried on trailers should be secured with a strong chain and padlock.
- When the trailer is not attached to your care, secure it with a heavy chain and lock it to a stationary object. Also, consider locking a coupler lock on the trailer as well.
- Chain your motorcycle to a stationary object such as a lamppost or sewer grating. Even when your vehicle is in the garage, use a heavy chain and padlock that resists conventional steel hacksaw blades.



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