

AUTO THEFT - CARJACKING DON'T MAKE IT EASY FOR A THIEF TO STEAL YOUR WHEELS



Don't make it easy for a thief to steal your wheels

According to the National Crime Prevention Council, one vehicle is stolen every 20 seconds in the United States. Stolen motor vehicles cost the victims time, money, and increase insurance premiums. They are also often used to commit other crimes.

The Basic Prevention Policy

Never leave your keys in the car or ignition, lock your car, even in front of your house.

Copy your Plate Number and vehicle identification number (VIN) on a card, and keep it with your driver's license. Keep your registration in your wallet also.

- Keep the keys to your home and car separate and avoid parking in isolated areas.
- If you think you're being followed, drive to the nearest public place to ask for help.
- If you drive frequently at night or alone, consider a CB radio or cellular phone to summon help if you need it.
- Do not pick up hitchhikers or hitchhike yourself.

Beware of carjackers

Carjacking - stealing a car by force - has captured headlines across the country. Your chances of becoming a victim is slim, and you can reduce the risk even more.

Why is Carjacking a Problem?

- It is a crime of opportunity, and the thief searches for the most vulnerable prey.
- Some young people believe carjacking is a rite of passage, a status symbol, or thrill.

- Cars can provide quick cash for drug users and other criminals.
- Alarms & locking devices make it harder for thieves to steal unoccupied cars.
- It's easy to steal or barter for guns. A pointed gun makes a powerful threat.
- Crimes of violence are increasing, and media interest may create "copycat" carjackers.

Carjacking - Random Acts of Violence

- Carjackings can occur any time, but most occur on late night hours.
- Carjacking isn't just a problem in cities, it happens in small towns & rural areas.
- Carjackers look for the opportunity, victims are not chosen by race, sex, or age.

What Do Carjackers Look For?

- Intersection controlled by traffic lights.
- Garages & parking lots for mass transit, shopping malls, and grocery stores
- Self-serve gas stations and car washes.
- ATMs - (Automated Teller Machines)
- Residential driveways & streets as people get in & out of their vehicles.
- Highway exit & entry ramps, or anywhere that drivers slow down or stop.

BUMP AND ROB

A car rear ends, or “BUMPS” you in traffic. You get out to check the damage to your vehicle. The driver or passenger of the other vehicle jumps in your car and drives off. If this occurs, look around before you get out. Make sure that other cars are around, and check the car out that hit you AND who is in the other car. If you feel uneasy about the situation, write down the plate number AND description of the car. Signal the car to follow you, and drive to the nearest police station or to a busy, well lit public area. When you exit your vehicle, take your keys, purse or wallet with you, and stay alert.



Reduce Your Risk

Getting In

- Walk with a purpose and stay alert.
- Approach your car with your keys in hand; look around and in your car before entering.
- Be aware of people asking for directions or handing out fliers. If you feel uneasy, get into your car quickly, lock your doors & drive away.

On The Road

- Keep your doors locked & windows rolled up at least part way, regardless of the distance you must drive.
- When you come to a stop, leave enough room between vehicles in case you need to get away if you sense trouble.
- Avoid driving alone whenever possible, especially at night.
- Do not stop to assist a stranger whose car is broken down. Drive to the nearest phone to call the police for help.

Getting Out

- Park in well lit areas near sidewalks. Avoid parking near dumpsters, woods, vans, trucks, or anything that limits your visibility.
- Never leave valuables in clear view, even if the door is locked; secure them in the trunk.
- Try to park in a garage with attendants. If you park with a valet, only leave the ignition key with no identification.
- Look around before you exit your car, stay alert to your surroundings. If It Happened to you
- If you are threatened with a weapon, give up your car. Do not argue; your life is more important than any car.
- Get away from the area as quickly as possible.
- Try to remember the carjackers physical description.
- Report the crime immediately to the police by **dialing 911.**

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