



Theft from motor vehicle

Preventing Theft from a Motor Vehicle

Your checklist

When you park your vehicle, just follow these simple tips:

- close your sunroof
- check you haven't left your keys in the ignition
- don't keep your log book in the car
- double-check your central locking has actually locked – listen for the clunk/click noise (if you've got keyless then look through the window to check)
- don't leave your car with the engine running
- don't leave anything of value in the car

Lock your vehicle

Locking your vehicle, even when filling up or parked on your drive, greatly reduces the possibility of it being targeted by an opportunist thief. Even if you have locked your vehicle, check you haven't left any windows or the sunroof open.

Fuelling up or popping back into your house to get something are perfect examples of how easy it is to turn your back for a moment and forget your vehicle is unsecured. So get into the habit of locking your vehicle even if you're only going to be away from it for a moment.

If your vehicle has wing mirrors that fold in automatically when locked, make sure you lock it properly. Criminal gangs are looking for vehicles like these where the wing mirrors are still out because it is clear to them that the vehicle has been left unlocked.

Take it with you or hide it

Your mobile phone, coins for the car park, sunglasses, packs of medication or other items that can earn quick cash are irresistible to the opportunist thief. Remember, the cost of replacing a window is often much more than that of what's stolen. And it should go without saying that wallets, handbags, purses and credit cards should never be left in an unattended vehicle.

Secure anything that's on the outside of your vehicle

Anything left on roof-racks, tailgate racks, holiday top boxes or in tool chests are easily stolen when the vehicle is parked. The use of cable locks, padlocks and self-locking tools chests, which are secured to the vehicle, makes them more secure, but still, don't leave things in them if you can avoid it.

Tool theft from vans

Vans are often targeted by thieves for the tools stored inside. If you have to leave tools in a van overnight, it's a good idea to mark them clearly with your name / company name and address using paint pens and seal with a clear lacquer spray. Alternatively, you can use a variety of other property marking systems, including Smartwater. Items that are clearly marked are less desirable and more difficult to sell on. Consider using a lockable cabinet within your van to store tools – a number of security rated products are available. Small cameras are also designed to record inside vehicles and portable battery alarms are useful

Park in well-lit and busier areas

It can take less than 30 seconds to break into a vehicle. Parking in well-lit areas and busy streets increases the chances of a thief being seen, so they'll probably steer clear. Pick your car park carefully. The Safer Parking Scheme is a national standard that benchmarks the safety and security of car parks. A 'Park Mark' means the site has been assessed and vetted by the police.

[Car park finder|Safer Parking Scheme \(parkmark.co.uk\)](http://parkmark.co.uk)

Hide electrical items and leave no clues

Leaving Sat Nav mounts, suction cup marks on windows or cables on view gives it away that you have left a Sat Nav, smartphone or other device in your car. Even if they can't see the Sat Nav or iPad they might still break in to see if it's stored in the car, out of sight.

Take your documents with you

Having a vehicle's registration and insurance documents could let a thief pretend to be the owner. Which means they could sell it on quite easily. So, never leave any documents in the vehicle.

We are also encouraging the community to call us on 101 if they see anyone acting suspiciously around a vehicle.

If you ever feel at risk, or a crime is in progress, please always dial 999.

Thank you for your help. It is only by the police and the public working together that we can prevent and detect crime.

