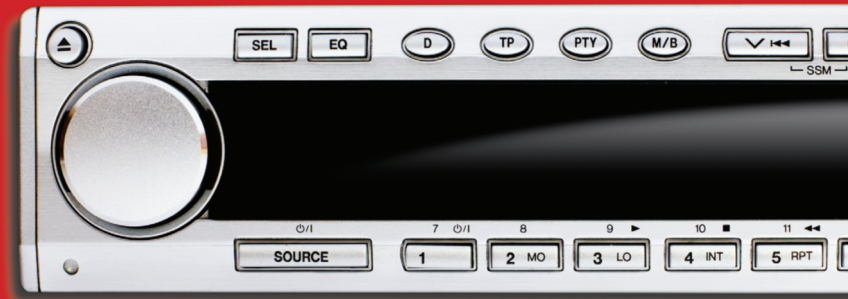


KNOW THE FACTS

PREVENTING CAR CRIME



TEN SECONDS IS ALL IT TAKES

Did you know it can take a thief as little as 10 seconds to steal your car, or the valuables you leave in it? This guide gives you invaluable information on how to keep your property safe and out of the hands of criminals.



**METROPOLITAN
POLICE**

NEW
SCOTLAND
YARD

KNOW THE FACTS ABOUT VEHICLE CRIME

Although vehicle crime has dropped over the last few years about two million car-related thefts are still committed each year. So being extra vigilant about your vehicle's security is the best way to avoid becoming a victim.

Most vehicle crime is preventable and by taking a few simple, common-sense and inexpensive measures, you can help prevent your property being stolen.

Useful information:
www.soldsecure.com
www.thatcham.org
www.immobilise.com



HOW TO KEEP YOUR VEHICLE SAFE: THE BASICS

Always

- 1** Close the windows and sunroof; lock the doors and activate any security devices when leaving your car unattended, even for only a few minutes.
- 2** Keep your car keys safe when at home – many cars are stolen following a house break in, so make sure you don't leave your keys in an obvious place such as the kitchen or hall table and beware that keys can be stolen through the letterbox.
- 3** Park with care. Try to park in a busy, well-lit area, close to CCTV cameras particularly at night or if you are leaving the vehicle for a long time. Find police approved car parks (those displaying 'ParkMark™') at www.saferparking.com.
- 4** Ensure your garage is as secure as possible with British Standard 5-level mortice locks and bolts for side and rear doors. Metal up and over doors can

be secured with purpose made locks fitted to either side, to reduce leverage. Wooden double doors can be secured with heavy hasps and staples and closed shackle padlocks.

Never

- 1** Leave cash, credit cards, chequebooks, mobile phones or other valuables in the car. Even a jacket or a plastic bag can tempt a thief. Hide any valuables in the boot of your car before you start your journey.
- 2** Never leave your keys in the car, even for a second – treat them as you would your cash and credit cards. Do not leave material with details of your home address in your vehicle.
- 3** Never leave your belongings where they can be seen.
- 4** Leave your vehicle documents inside the car. Hide them at home and not in an obvious place.

SECURE YOUR VEHICLE, OR RISK LOSING IT

Immobilisers

Electronic engine immobilisers prevent your vehicle from starting and are the best way to stop thieves. Only buy security devices that are approved by either Thatcham, the Motor Insurance Repair Research Centre on 01635 868855, www.thatcham.org, or by Sold Secure on 01327 264 687, or visit www.soldsecure.com. Have it professionally fitted either by your car dealer or by an installer approved by the Vehicle Systems Installation Board.

Alarms

Alarms help to deter thieves from stealing your car, or breaking into it. For more information about alarms, contact the Vehicle Security National Helpline on 08705 502006, or find an approved installer through the Vehicle Systems Installation Board at www.vsib.co.uk

Property and equipment marking

- Etching your Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) or registration number onto your windscreen, windows and headlights provides an additional visible deterrent.
- Property mark your equipment, such as stereos and satellite navigation systems, with your postcode and house number. Make a note of the make, model and serial number and register it at the National Property Register, visit: www.immobilise.com

Steering locks

Steering locks are a very visible deterrent and are ideal also for older cars. Fit one that has been tested by Thatcham and meets Category 4 approval.

Don't give thieves a motive. Keep your valuables safe.

Remember, many thieves aren't even after your car, they're looking to steal the valuable possessions you've left on display in your vehicle. In fact, every year, more cars are broken into than are stolen. Following this simple advice will help you keep your belongings out of the hands of criminals:

- 1** Never leave valuable items such as satellite navigation systems in your car overnight, even if it is parked in your driveway. Most thefts of and from vehicles happen when they are parked outside the home.
- 2** When removing your satellite navigation equipment, don't forget to erase the suction mark it leaves on your windscreen.
- 3** Keep bags and other valuable belongings out of sight and lock your doors or wind up your windows when stationary or in slow moving traffic. Thieves can lean in and steal your things in just a couple of seconds.

Advice about motorcycles and cycles

- To secure your bicycle, buy a good quality D-lock or combination lock. When leaving your bicycle unattended, lock both wheels and remove detachable items like lights. Consider getting your bike frame security marked.
- To secure your motorbike, use a steering lock and steel cable, or D-lock to attach your bike to security rails or a ground anchor. For extra security, have an alarm and immobiliser fitted.

THINKING OF BUYING A USED CAR?

Always

- 1 Ask to see proof of the seller's identity and address, such as a driving licence.
- 2 Make sure the car's Vehicle Registration Number (VIN) matches that on the registration document (V5). The VIN is a unique 17 character number issued to every vehicle by the manufacturer and can usually be found:
 - stamped on the body chassis or frame.
 - on a manufacturer's VIN plate under the bonnet or fixed to the post between the front and rear doors.

Never

- 1 Let the seller bring the car to you, as you may need to confirm their address details.
- 2 Buy a car without the registration document (V5) – make sure it has a DVLA watermark and has not been altered in any way.

What to do if you are concerned about a used car

- If you are worried, ask the AA, RAC or another reputable organisation to inspect the car before you buy it.
- You can check the car's history and second-hand status by calling Equifax HPI on 01722 422 422, or visit **www.hpi.co.uk**

The Directgov website, at **www.directgov.uk**, gives detailed advice on buying a used car, and you check whether a car you are interested in:

- has been reported stolen
- has sustained any serious damage
- still has an outstanding finance agreement on it.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU EXPERIENCE VEHICLE CRIME

If your car is being stolen call 999 immediately and you will be connected to the police. If your car has been stolen or broken into there is no immediate emergency. First check that your car has not been removed by a local authority for being illegally parked, for example. If you confirm it has been stolen, call the Metropolitan Police on 0300 123 1212.

If your car has been stolen, the police will give you a crime number. You will need to report the theft to your insurance company and give them the crime number.

If you have any information on car crime, or any other kind of crime, and you would prefer not to speak to police you can call **Crimestoppers** anonymously on **0800 555 111**, or visit: **www.crimestoppers-uk.org**. Crimestoppers is an independent charity.



If you require this document in another format, please contact us at
Publicity,
Room 1334,
New Scotland Yard,
The Broadway,
London SW1H 0BG.

For further crime prevention advice visit:
www.met.police.uk/crimeprevention
or call 0300 123 1212 or visit your
nearest police station.