

# VEHICLE and BICYCLE SECURITY

**Y**ou can do a lot to prevent a vehicle theft. Have you read how easy it is for a car thief to enter a locked vehicle? The truth is that in many cases, the keys were left in the ignition. You need to remove the opportunity for a crime to take place.

## VEHICLE SECURITY

### Lock Your Car

Lock all doors and windows to avoid being a target.

### Don't Leave Your Car Running

Leaving your car running and unoccupied may seem convenient, especially to warm the car in winter, but it's an invitation to a thief.

### Install Anti-Theft Devices

Installing an anti-theft device such as a locking device for your steering wheel or ignition cut device tells a potential thief that you are protecting your vehicle. A car alarm is a deterrent and will detect any attempt at an intrusion and help protect the car's contents.

### Remove Valuables

Remove all items of value or place them in the trunk of your vehicle. Cell phones, briefcases, loose change, and tape or CD players are obvious targets for criminals.

### Be Smart When You Park

Park in a safe, well-lit area where it would be difficult for someone to tamper with your vehicle. At home, use your garage or park as close to your residence as possible, preferably off the street.

### Protect Your Registration

Keep your vehicle registration in a secure location in the car. Keep your title at home or in a safe deposit box.

### Protect Yourself in Your Car

Never pick up a hitchhiker, it's just not safe. Remember to keep your doors locked at all times. If someone approaches your car, do not open the door or window; if possible, drive away.

## FACTS ABOUT AUTO THEFT

### Auto Theft and Larceny

Police refer to auto theft as motor vehicle theft. If a person takes your car without your permission, it is considered motor vehicle theft. That person may be punished by up to five years in prison.

If someone enters your vehicle and steals the contents (e.g., a tape deck or wallet), police refer to the case as a Larceny TFA (taken from auto).

### Who Steals Cars?

Car thieves are often amateurs, under the age of 20, who will take a car for the thrill of joy riding.

Professionals who steal cars may sell them with a phony registration or dismantle them in a "chop shop" and sell the parts.

### What Cars are Stolen?

Any type of vehicle can be a target for thieves.

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## PROTECT YOUR BICYCLE AGAINST THEFT

A bicycle can be stolen from just about any place, but simple precautions can deter would-be bike thieves.

### **Start by Locking Your Bicycle**

Most bikes that are stolen were not locked. Always lock your bike securely, whether you're gone for a few minutes or a few hours. Use a "U-lock," which secures both wheels and the frame to a stationary object such as a post, tree or a bike rack. For extra security, add a chain or cable with a good case-hardened padlock.

### **Keep Good Identification Records**

Record the serial number of your bike and keep it, along with your sales receipt and a picture of your bike, in a safe place at home.

Mark your bike with an engraver to deter thieves. Engraving also helps police to identify a bike and return it to the rightful owner. You can find more information about engraving on page 7.

Finally, ask your local schools about bicycle registration programs.

**Report a theft to the police as soon as you can.**

**Remember to always wear your helmet.**

It's the law.

## USE YOUR BLOCK WATCH

Practice good Block Watch techniques by quickly calling the police when you observe any suspicious activities in your community. The police want to know when you see a stranger or an unusual vehicle. Your call may prevent a crime from happening in your community.

