

Thefts from vehicles have dramatically increased over the past several years. Many of the thefts occur in our own driveways. The popularity of radar detectors and expensive sound systems, which are quickly and easily stolen, has seemed to encourage car prowlers. Your insurance company and your local police and sheriff departments would like to help you avoid the frustration and inconvenience of being the victim of this type of crime. Please take a few minutes to read this information and pass it along to others.

Common Methods of Entry Into Vehicles

- Smash out a window
- Use a tool to unlock the door
- Crawl through a pick up truck topper and force or pry the sliding window
- Enter vehicle in unsecured garage
- No force necessary, door unlocked

The Most Likely Targets For Theft

- Any vehicle with a visible radar detector, visible power cord, or mount
- Vehicles containing a brief case, purse, gym bag or other valuables left in sight
- Vehicles equipped with a mobile phone
- Vehicles left running unattended at convenience stores and other public places

Property Most Often Stolen From Vehicles

- Gym bags
- Brief Cases
- Purses
- Sunglasses
- Check books
- Auto Parts
- Rings/Watches
- Camera Gear
- Radar Detector and power cords
- Speakers
- Car Batteries
- Handtools, toolboxes, power tools
- Spare change
- Guns/weapons

What Do Thieves Do With The Property They Steal?

Many things can be sold to other thieves or to someone who is "looking for a deal". Other items can be sold for cash at pawn shops. Some thieves look for purses to steal. They will immediately make large purchases on the credit cards and alter the victim's ID so they or an accomplice can forge the checks. This can cause an incredible amount of worry, hassle and inconvenience for a victim. The thief doesn't care about you, your feelings or the hardship the theft will put you through. His or her point of view is, "Why should I pay for something when I can steal it?"

How Can I Prevent A Theft From My Vehicle?

To deter a criminal from breaking into your car, lock your vehicle and put valuables out of

sight, preferably in the trunk or bring them into the house at night. Thieves will break into any vehicle if they think there is something of value to be stolen from it. Thieves know that checkbooks, wallets, watches, calculators, and other small electronics may be contained in a brief case. Similarly, they are aware that many gym bags contain valuable jewelry, keys, cash, mp3 players, headphones, etc.

Thieves have also told police that many times they look for suction cup markings on the wind-shield, which would indicate a mount for a radar detector or GPS. If they see such marks, they may break into the vehicle and search for the items.

After removing valuables from view, lock your car doors. This will discourage some of the more casual thieves, the ones looking for the opportunity to steal. It will also deter those who would go into an unlocked car to look for a trunk or hood release button in order to steal auto parts or the contents of the trunk.

A theft from your vehicle can happen any hour of the day or night. By reporting suspicious activity, while it is occurring, you could save yourself or your neighbor from being victimized. If you see or hear something that seems unusual or suspicious;