

➤ **The best way to prevent theft**

from your auto is to always keep valuables “outta sight.” Never leave cell phones, briefcases, suitcases, or small electronic devices (personal music devices, digital assistants, etc.) in your car in plain view. Take these items with you, or secure them - **all the time, everytime!**

- If your car has a trunk, use it. Put valuables in there or in a locked glove compartment. Hiding items under seats is better than leaving them in plain view, but securing them inside the glove compartment or trunk is a far better deterrent.
- Especially during the holiday season, or anytime you're shopping, place packages in the trunk, not on the passenger seats or floors.
- Secure articles BEFORE you arrive at your destination, so that thieves don't see you locking valuables in your car and leaving it.
- Look for car radios or other sound systems that can operate only in the vehicle it was originally installed in. This reduces the risk of theft.
- If you can unfasten your sound system and take it with you, or lock it in your trunk, do so. And don't forget to do the same with your CDs.
- Don't leave spare keys or codes for radios in your vehicle.
- Also, keep your car doors and windows locked - **all the time!**

Carjacking

While the violent crime of carjacking can be particularly frightening, there are some things you can do to protect yourself. Always be aware of your surroundings, keep your doors locked and windows rolled up, drive in the center lane and call police if you feel threatened.

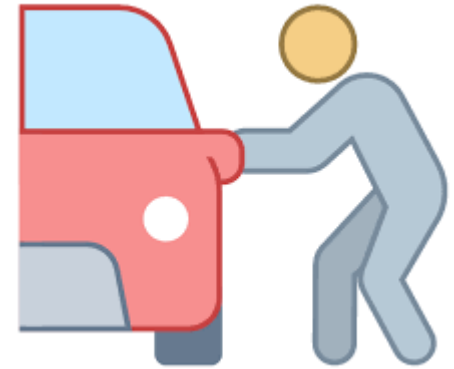
Get Involved!

No one individual or agency working alone can prevent crime. It takes **police and citizens working in partnership**. The Town of Brighton community policing strategy provides many ways for police and communities to work together to prevent crime and build safer neighborhoods.



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For Your Safety



Protecting Your Vehicle

from Theft and Tampering

Tips for protecting your vehicle from being vandalized, broken into, and stolen



Save Yourself the Aggravation

You can save your family and yourself a lot of frustration, stress, and interruption to your daily life by taking some simple precautions to reduce the risk of having your vehicle become a target. The following are some steps you can take to make your car, and the valuables it may contain, less attractive to thieves.

Exercise Common Sense

An unlocked vehicle with a key in the ignition is an open invitation to any thief, regardless of any anti-theft device you may use. The common-sense approach to protection is the simplest and most cost-effective way to avoid would-be thieves.

You should **ALWAYS** secure your vehicle even if you're parking for "just a minute." Do this by:

- Removing your keys from the ignition.
- Locking all of your doors.
- Closing all of your windows.
- Parking in a well-lit area.
- **NEVER** leaving your engine running and vehicle unlocked while you run into your home, a convenience store, or anywhere else.

Employ Visible or Audible Deterrents

A visible or audible device alerts thieves that your vehicle is protected. Popular devices include:

- Audible alarms are typically equipped with motion impact sensors that trigger a 120-decibel siren. The alarm should have an automatic shut-off capability.
- Steering wheel locks prevent the steering wheel from turning.
- Steering column collars prevent thieves from hot-wiring the vehicle. Some collars are installed permanently; others must be continuously activated.
- Theft deterrent decals visually warn thieves the vehicle is protected by an alarm or other anti-theft device.

- Tire locks, similar to the circular steel boots used by many police departments, prevent the vehicle from being driven.
- Window etching. If the vehicle identification number (VIN) is etched onto the vehicle's windows, it makes it difficult for thieves to resell the vehicle or its parts.

Use a Tracking System or Vehicle Immobilizer

A tracking system can emit a signal to police or to a monitoring station when the vehicle is reported stolen. Tracking systems are effective in helping authorities recover stolen autos.

Vehicle immobilizers prevent thieves from bypassing your ignition and hot-wiring the vehicle. Some electronic devices have computer chips in the ignition keys. Other devices inhibit the flow of electricity or fuel to the engine until a hidden switch or button is activated. Popular third-level devices include:

- Smart keys - contain specially-coded computer chips or radio frequencies. Without the exact key, the vehicle's engine cannot be started.
- Fuse cut-offs.
- Kill switches - inhibit the flow of electricity or fuel to the engine until a hidden switch is activated.
- Starter, ignition and fuel disablers.

Take Care When Buying a Car

Being prudent when buying a used or new car can help prevent you from serious headache or frustration down the road. Here are some ways to avoid being scammed:

- **LOOK CLOSELY** at the vehicle identification number (VIN) plate, located on the driver's side of the dashboard to see if it appears tampered with.
- **NEVER** buy a used car without getting the vehicle's title or pink slip in person. Double-check the VIN with the number listed on the title, the registration papers and the federal certification label on the driver's side door.

If you're considering buying a used car, there are several companies that, for a nominal fee, will run the VIN through their computers and check the history of the vehicle. The companies can be found on the Web by performing a search for "Vehicle History Reports."

- **ASK TO SEE IDENTIFICATION** of the person who is selling you the car. Record his/her name, address, phone number, and driver's license number. Call the phone number given to you by the vehicle's owner.

Vehicle Identification Numbers (VINs) are serial numbers for vehicles that are used to differentiate similar makes and models; every vehicle has a unique VIN. VIN plates are located on the dashboard and can be viewed through the windshield.

Types of VIN Scams

➤ **VIN Switch:** Thieves use VIN switching to disguise the identity of a stolen vehicle. They will replace the VIN on a stolen vehicle with a VIN that is not recorded as stolen. The thief will then try to resell the stolen car to an unsuspecting customer.

➤ **Salvage Switch:** A vehicle that is extensively damaged, burned or stripped and determined not to be eligible for repair is called "salvaged". Thieves buy a salvaged vehicle just to obtain the title and the VIN. Then they go out and steal a car that is the same make and model, and switch the VIN plates.

Theft from Auto

One of the most common types of theft is theft of valuables from your automobile. Theft from auto is **STRICTLY A CRIME OF OPPORTUNITY** that can be prevented if you take away the opportunity. Thieves generally won't waste their time breaking into autos that don't have valuables in plain sight.