

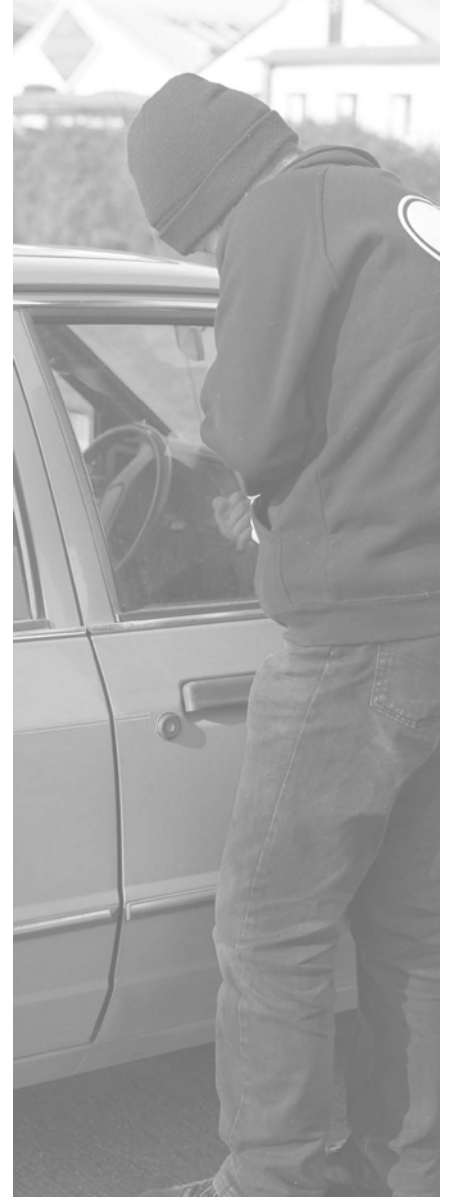


## **Keep Your Car Secure**

Here are a few simple tips to help you keep your car and its contents safe:

### **Security:**

- **Car Alarms** -Car alarms can deter thieves from not only stealing your car, but also taking items from it, so have an alarm fitted and always use it. They should be fitted by a professional installer(\*see below).
- **Immobilisers** - Since October 1998, all new vehicles have been fitted with electronic engine immobilisers. Immobilisers prevent your car from being driven away without the keys. If your car does not have an immobiliser fitted, consider having a Thatcham approved immobiliser professionally fitted (\*see below).
- **Steering Locks** - Consider buying a steering wheel lock, and use it every time you leave your car.
- **Locking Wheel Nuts** -These are cheap, easy to fit and stop thieves from taking your wheels.
- **Etching** - Have your car registration number or the last 7 digits of your Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) etched onto all windows, both windscreens and your headlamps.
- **Tracking Device** - If you have an expensive car, or if it has a high sentimental value, consider buying an in-car tracking device.
- **Security Markings** -Mark all your car equipment, like your car stereo, satellite navigation systems etc with your vehicle registration number or your postcode and house number using an ultra violet pen or other property marking systems readily available. (keep a record of make, model and serial numbers of any in-car equipment)
- **Tax discs** - Thieves often target tax discs. Use a tamper proof holder.



### **When you leave your car:**



- **Never leave anything on display** when you leave your vehicle – even an old coat or a plastic bag can make a thief inquisitive as to what is in it.
- Mobile phones, coats, bags and CDs are all a potential target for thieves. **Take all valuables with you.**
- If you cannot take valuables coats, bags etc with you **always lock them out of site in the boot** but make sure no-one is watching.
- Always **lock and secure your vehicle,** check windows and sunroof are fully closed.
- Always **remove satellite navigation systems,** including any cradles and clean any tell-tale sucker marks from the windscreen.

### **Keys:**

- At home, **don't leave your keys near windows or doors** where they can be seen or reached by thieves.
- Do not leave your car unattended with the keys in the ignition. **Always take your keys with you** and ensure your car is locked whenever you leave it e.g. when popping into the newsagents or filling up with petrol.
- On cold mornings, **don't leave your car unattended with the engine running** while it warms up.
- Insurance companies may no longer cover you against the theft of vehicles left unlocked or unattended when the keys are in the ignition.



## Parking:

- When parking at home, **always use your garage** if you have one. Lock both the car and the garage.
- If you park on a driveway, close and **lock any gates**.
- If you don't have a garage or driveway, always **try to park in a well-lit, open place**.
- When parking away from home, always try and **park your car in an attended car park**. Try to look for a public car park which is part of police-approved scheme. **Look for the police approved Safer Car Park or Secured Car Park signs**. - [www.securecarparks.com](http://www.securecarparks.com). or [www.saferparking.com](http://www.saferparking.com)
- These car parks have high standards of design and management to make them safer, or choose a car park with CCTV and/or security guards.
- Always think about where you are going to park. **Park in well lit areas**.

## Whilst driving:

- Keep **doors locked** at all times.
- **Do not leave your bag or other items on the passenger seat**. Put them in the front or rear passenger's footwell out of sight (not under the driver's seat- in case they move and interfere with the foot pedals).
- **Don't wind the window down too far**. Someone could reach in whilst you are stationary.

**Buying a new car?** - Get a commercial database such as [HPI Group Ltd \(www.hpicheck.com\)](http://www.hpicheck.com), [Carwatch UK Ltd. \(www.carwatchuk.com\)](http://www.carwatchuk.com) or CCN Motorfile to check out the car you've got your eye on - has it been reported stolen or written off by an insurance company?

**\* Installing security equipment?** - You should only buy security devices or services that are approved by either Thatcham (the Motor Insurance Repair Research Centre 0870 550 2006, [www.thatcham.org](http://www.thatcham.org)) or by Sold Secure (01327 264 687 - [www.soldsecure.com](http://www.soldsecure.com)) - or that meet the standards referred to in the particular sections above.

Fitted devices should be installed by a professional - either your car dealer or by an installer approved by the Vehicle Systems Installation Board. Check out [www.vsib.co.uk](http://www.vsib.co.uk) or visit [www.rmif.co.uk](http://www.rmif.co.uk) to find your nearest approved garage or dealership.

