

Vehicle Security

Though professional car thieves have entered the field in increasing numbers, most cars are taken by amateurs who can be stopped fairly easily. You can greatly increase your protection against this type of crime by taking the following sensible precautions

Lock Up

- An unlocked car is an open invitation to a car thief.. *Lock up whenever you leave your car, and take the keys with you.*

- Lock the trunk and/or tailgate.

- Close all windows - professional thieves have tools that help unlock cars through a minimum of open space.

- When you park the car, remove phones, tape/CD player or other valuable possessions from the car. Do not leave gift-wrapped packages or cameras lying on the seat of your car. Lock all valuables in the trunk or take them with you.

Park Carefully

- Avoid leaving an auto unattended in public parking lots for an extended period of time. A car is five times more likely to be stolen from an unattended lot than from the street or an attended lot.

- If possible, park your car in a lot where you don't have to leave your keys.

- Never attach a tag with your name and address to your key ring. If the keys are lost or stolen, the tag will lead the thief directly to your car - and your home. If you have to leave your keys with a parking attendant, only leave the ignition key.

- At night, park in well-lighted areas with pedestrian traffic.

Operation I.D.

- With an electric engraver, etch your California Driver's License number preceded by the letters "CA: on phones, CD/tape decks and other removable items.

- Record your vehicle identification number (located on a small metal plate on the dashboard of newer cars) and store it in a safe place.

- When buying a car, check the manufacturer's list of anti-theft options, such as alarm device, interior hood and trunk release, locking steering columns and others.

- Consider the purchase and installation of security devices, such as:

- Interior hood lock and release

- A second ignition switch or "kill switch" which prevents electrical current from reaching coil distributor.

- A fuel switch which prevents fuel from reaching the carburetor or fuel injectors.

- A locking gas cap.

- Locking devices for batteries, wheels, decks, etc.

- An alarm device which will activate a siren, horn or lights - or all

three - to frighten the thief away before he is able to steal your car.

How To Prevent Theft of Other Motor Vehicles

Thefts of motorcycles, boats and trailbikes are also increasing. Many of the same precautions that apply to cars and bicycles also apply to recreational vehicles.

Lock It

- Lock up and take the keys with you.

- Make sure all easy-to-carry items like motors, water skis and camping gear are locked up before leaving your vehicle.