



Auto

SIX TIPS TO FOIL AUTO THEFT

When it comes to auto-theft vulnerability, many cars' license plates might as well read "EZ-MARK." Police report that, in more than 50% of car-theft cases, drivers unwittingly help crooks by leaving their doors unlocked. Nearly 15% of those drivers leave the keys, too.

While a truly determined thief can nab most anything on four wheels, you'll make your car less of a target when you follow these tips:

1. Pocket your keys and lock the doors whenever you park – even if you'll be away just a few seconds. Never hide a spare key under the seat or above the visor. Those are the first places thieves look.
2. At attended parking lots, leave only the ignition key with the car. Take the trunk key, the key to your home, and all other keys with you.
3. When parking on the street, find a well-lit area. Good lighting is even more critical if you're parking overnight. (Thieves intent on ransacking cars often strike between 3 and 5 a.m.).
4. Don't invite a break-in by leaving valuables like smart phones, MP3 players, or packages in view. Take them with you or lock them in the trunk.
5. When stashing valuables in the trunk, do it before you park so a thief doesn't see you. If you don't have a trunk, put belongings out of sight on the floor or under the seat.
6. Be extra careful at service stations and convenience stores. Thieves lurk in parking lots and listen for the bell that dings when a key is in the ignition.

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