

Vehicle Security

Safe City Factsheet Series Issue 5: Vehicle Security

By international standards Sydney is a safe city and you can play an important role in maintaining the safety of yourself and your property.



Justice & Attorney General



Five Fast Facts

1. On average 1 in 70 Australian households had a vehicle stolen in the last 12 months.*
2. The majority of stolen vehicles are more than 10 years old.**
3. 54% of car theft victims admit they could have done more to prevent the theft.***
4. 41% of victims of steal from motor vehicle crime admitted item/s stolen from their vehicles were visible from the street.**
5. Most motor vehicle thefts are a crime of opportunity.**

* National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council (NMVTRC) (2005)

** NMVTRC 2005

*** AAMI Motor Vehicle Security Index 2005

Tips for vehicle security

1. **Visible belongings are a risk**
Always take personal belongings with you when you leave your vehicle.
2. **Install a high quality electronic alarm**
A high quality, audible car alarm is a good deterrent to theft. Make sure you activate it every time you park, even if it's just for a few minutes.
3. **Lock up every time**
Always lock doors, close windows and your sunroof every time you leave your car.
4. **Never leave your keys in the ignition**
Even if you leave your car for a minute or two, never leave your keys in the ignition. Your car can be stolen in an instant.
5. **Install an engine immobiliser**
Installing an engine immobiliser is one of the best safeguards against opportunistic vehicle theft. (Immobilisers should meet Australian Standard 4601:1999).
6. **Park wisely**
Park in well-lit areas at night. Try to avoid parking in quiet back-streets where there are few passers-by.
7. **Steering wheel locks are a deterrent**
While the National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council (NMVTRC) recommends immobilisers as an effective vehicle theft deterrent, high quality steering wheel locks can also deter car theft. The NMVTRC suggests that, due to the time taken to fit a wheel lock, they are often neglected on the floor of the vehicle. If relying on a wheel lock to deter vehicle theft, you must fit the lock to the steering wheel every time you park your car.
8. **Lock up your bike**
Lock your motor bike, scooter or bicycle with a high quality lock, to something secure such as rails or ground anchors, every time you leave it unattended.

Safeguard your keys

Keeping your keys safe and secure will prevent vehicle theft.

- ✓ **Don't make your keys an easy target**
Never leave your keys on your desk at work or in easily accessible places like in your bag or on a table. Don't leave your keys in an obvious place at home.
- ✓ **Don't hide spare keys on your vehicle**
Never hide spare keys on your vehicle, even if they are not visible. Thieves know where to look.



Don't make your vehicle a target

Don't tempt thieves by leaving valuables unattended.

- ✓ **Never leave valuables in your vehicle**
Even jackets, mobile phones and loose change can be a target for offenders.
- ✓ **Never leave luggage unattended on roof racks**
Never leave luggage and other valuables such as bicycles, surfboards or other belongings unattended on roof racks or other external carriers on your vehicle.
- ✓ **Don't leave important documents in your vehicle**
Do not leave any important documents including identification cards and papers in your vehicle.
- ✓ **Record your VIN number**
Make sure you record your Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) and Registration Number and store them in a secure place away from your vehicle.
- ✓ **Never leave your bike helmet with your bike**
When you leave your motor bike, scooter or bicycle, never leave your helmet or other valuables unattended. Always take them with you.

Lock up and secure

Locking out offenders is the key to prevent vehicle theft.

- ✓ **Install wheel locking devices**
Use wheel locks to prevent theft of expensive wheels and tyres.
- ✓ **Install a security alarm system**
Vehicle alarms should be audible, visible (for example display a flashing light when activated) and incorporate an engine immobiliser for the best protection. (Immobilisers should meet Australian Standard 4601:1999.)
- ✓ **Drive with your doors locked and your windows up**
When you're driving, keep your car doors locked and your windows up if possible, to minimise the risk of car-jacking or robbery. Keep personal belongings on the floor or behind the front seats.
- ✓ **Use a cover**
Use a motorbike or scooter cover to deter theft.
- ✓ **Security-mark your bike**
To deter theft and aid recovery in case of theft, engrave your bike frame with your driver's licence number or passport number.

Insure your vehicle

Having valid, up-to-date vehicle insurance is your best bet in case of theft.

- ✓ **Get up-to-date insurance**
Insure your vehicle against theft. Make sure your policy is up-to-date and reflects your current residential address.
- ✓ **Don't invalidate insurance**
Remember many vehicle insurance policies will be void if you don't take adequate precautions to protect your vehicle.

The City of Sydney Council, the Department of Justice and Attorney General and the NSW Police Force provide this information as general advice only. Readers should exercise their own skill and care in use of the information.

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