

Neighborhood Watch

Don't Be a Victim

Simple Tips for Auto Break-In Prevention

newsletter

It takes less than a minute for a thief to break your car window and snatch the cell phone, laptop, or purse on the front seat. Don't become a statistic. Here are 10 common sense habits and tips for preventing car break-ins.

Car Break-In Prevention Tips

1. Keep your car visible. Park in well-lit areas near people or with an on-duty parking lot or garage attendant.

Avoid having your car concealed by larger vehicles, fences, or foliage; thieves like to "work" in private.

2. Don't make it easy. Keep windows and sunroofs closed and doors locked. Almost one-fourth of thefts from vehicles are from unlocked cars.

3. Activate your vehicle's alarm. Don't have one? Factory-installed anti-theft systems are best. However, a professionally installed alarm can discourage a car break-in from a thief who likes to "work" in silence.

4. Hide your valuables. Many smash-and-grab thieves act on impulse, so keep your stuff out of sight – either with you or in a locked trunk.

5. If you have a wagon or SUV that leaves your cargo area open, get a retractable fitted cover to keep shopping bags or other belongings hidden.



6. Stow your stuff before arrival. Experienced thieves often stake out parking lots to watch for people putting items in their trunk. Help prevent car break-ins by putting valuables like laptops, shopping bags, purses and any other valuables in your trunk before you get to the parking lot.

7. After you've put your stuff in the trunk, don't forget to hide and or stow such telltale evidence as power plugs and chargers. Thieves know what they're looking for, so hide the electronic accessories, too.

8. Don't hand a thief your keys. Take your keys with you. And if you think you have a great hiding place for a spare key, thieves know to look above the visor, in the center console, under the floor mat, in the trunk well, etc.

9. Trust your instincts. If you see suspicious activity, find another spot to park. If you're concerned, tell the attendant or report your suspicions to police. You may be helping keep another person from being a victim of a car break-in or worse.

10. Take it one more step. Many vehicles are broken into with the intent of stealing the vehicle itself.

Visible anti-theft devices, like steering wheel locks, steering column collars, or brake pedal locks may discourage the would-be thief from breaking in and trying.

If your vehicle is broken into, report it to the Whittier Police Department immediately by dialing 562.567.9240.

