

## SECURITY DEVICES AND ALARMS

No security device is foolproof, but good vehicle security can greatly reduce your chances of becoming a victim. Consider installing at least two of the following security devices:

- ▶ A good quality **steering wheel locking device**,
- ▶ A **circular metal band, or "collar"** locked around the steering column to protect the ignition lock from tampering,
- ▶ **Auxiliary locking devices** for wind-wings, sliding windows and spare tires and the hood,
- ▶ **Tapered door lock buttons**,
- ▶ A **kill switch or cutoff switch** (an electrical device that effectively immobilizes the vehicle, even if the ignition has been forced),
- ▶ A **Stolen Vehicle Recover System (SVRS)** installed in your vehicle to assist law enforcement with tracking and recovering the vehicle should it be stolen, and/or
- ▶ An **alarm** to deter theft.

## ESSENTIAL FEATURES OF ALARM SYSTEMS

- ▶ Integrated kill switch
- ▶ Lights *and* an audible signal are activated
- ▶ Self-arming and anti code-grabbing
- ▶ Visible L.E.D. indicator

## OPTIONAL FEATURES

- ▶ Remote activated panic alarm
- ▶ Remote activated interior lights
- ▶ Anti-carjack system
- ▶ Driver door auto-unlock
- ▶ Motion sensors (especially for convertibles)

## BUYING AND SELLING

When *selling* a car, don't let a stranger take it for a test drive alone. If a prospective buyer wants to take the car to a mechanic for an appraisal, volunteer to deliver and pick up the car. Accepting only money orders or a cashier's check is wise, free of any smears or possible alterations.

When *buying* a used car, be sure to verify the seller's name and address, and that the VIN on the registration is the same as on the car. Law enforcement seizes thousands of stolen cars from innocent buyers every year.

## NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

Immediately contact the Sheriff's Department if you observe suspicious activity, such as:

- ▶ A stranger looking inside parked vehicles
- ▶ Someone tampering with a vehicle
- ▶ Any abandoned vehicle you find parked on your street

---

*If your vehicle is broken into or stolen, inform local law enforcement immediately. Stolen vehicles are often used in the commission of another crime. Quick action may not only aid in the recovery of your vehicle, but also prevent its use for illegal purposes.*

---

Developed by the Crime Prevention Unit of the San Diego County Sheriff's Department

---

## PROTECT YOUR VEHICLE



### The facts are:

*While approximately 87% of California's stolen vehicles are recovered, only half of those are recovered in drivable condition.*

*In California, San Diego County ranks second (behind Los Angeles) in highest number of vehicle thefts.*

*In San Diego County, an average of three motor vehicles was reported stolen per hour in 1994.*

**San Diego County  
Sheriff's Department**

---

**C**ar thieves, like home burglars, generally have an easy time of it. Their thievery is made simple by car owners who obligingly leave doors unlocked (in four out of five cases of auto theft) or who leave keys in the ignition (in one out of five cases).

Though professional car thieves have entered the field in increasing numbers, many cars are still taken by amateurs, who can be deterred easily. **A criminal usually does not want to be seen, does not want to be heard and does not want to take an excessive amount of time.** You can greatly increase your protection against this type of crime by taking the following sensible precautions:

## LOCK IT

**Lock all doors** and roll up windows whenever you leave your vehicle unattended. Be sure vent windows, a favorite means of entry for thieves, are locked.

Never leave your keys in an unattended car, even while running a quick errand.

**Check your keys** for number codes, and have them removed. Be sure to note the number in your records in case you need duplicates.

Never attach a tag with your name and address to a key ring. However, a tag with your driver's license number would aid in having them returned to you should they be lost or stolen.



When having your car serviced or parked, leave only your ignition key.

**Don't keep an extra key hidden** anywhere on the vehicle. If you need a spare, consider carrying a "credit card" key or key holder in your wallet.

## PARK CAREFULLY

Use all the security measures you have wherever you park, even in your garage.

A vehicle is five times more likely to be stolen from an unattended lot than from the street or an attended lot.

At work and in commercial areas, park close to the entrance in a well-lit area near pedestrian traffic.

Turn the wheels sharply and apply the emergency brake when parking to deter unauthorized towing.

At home, the best place to park is a well-secured garage, *with car doors locked and alarm set.* Secure your garage as if you had \$20,000 cash sitting inside.

Remove garage door openers from the vehicle. Your remote can be converted to a key-chain size, which you can keep in a pocket or purse.

## IDENTIFICATION

Mark your Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) in several places such as tailgates, spoilers, and under the hood, using an engraver or dye marker.

Have the VIN etched into all windows.

Many specialized vehicles do not have VINs and should be marked with your drivers license number.

With an electric engraver, etch your driver's license number on all personal property.

Never leave your driver's license, registration, or anything else with your name and address on it accessible in an unattended vehicle.

THESE SUGGESTIONS  
MAKE THE VEHICLE  
MORE DIFFICULT FOR  
THE THIEF TO SELL.

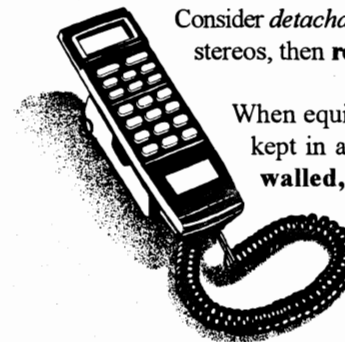
Keep copies of all vehicle related documents (such as registration) on file. Record serial numbers of all off-road and unlicensed vehicles.

Carry a copy of your registration or your vehicle make, model and license number in your wallet, for ease of identification in case of emergency or theft.

## VEHICLE BURGLARY

Preventing thieves from breaking into your vehicle to steal valuables is very difficult. So if you want to keep it, **don't leave it in your car.**

Never leave valuables in plain sight. Consider *detachable* cellular phones and stereos, then **remove them** faithfully.



When equipment or tools must be kept in a vehicle, use a **strong-walled, tamper-proof box, bolted down,** with high security locks. Consider the value of the equipment when choosing your locks!

(Be sure to engrave ALL TOOLS with your drivers' license number.) Do not assume a box is secure because it is heavy.

## SPECIALTY VEHICLES

Vehicles carried on trailers should be secured with a **maximum security chain and padlock.**

When storing your trailer, secure it with a heavy chain and padlock, anchored to an **imbedded hitch** or stationary object

**Chain** motorcycles or trail bikes to a permanently fixed object such as a lamppost. Even when your vehicle is in the garage, use a heavy chain and an extra high security padlock.