

Auto theft

Why vehicles are stolen:

- **To sell the vehicle or parts** - Often thieves will take your car out of the Province or Country. Identification numbers may be altered or removed, ownership certificates forged, parts sold or the vehicle repainted.
- **For transportation** - Thieves will use your vehicle to get where they want to go and later abandon the vehicle. They may just drive it around to gain 'status' with their friends.
- **To commit other crimes** - Vehicles are stolen and used in other crimes such as robberies, break and enters, drug dealing or drive-by shootings.
- **For vehicle cloning** - Vehicles are stolen, given a fraudulent identification number and then sold to unsuspecting persons who are defrauded of their money. Fraudulent vehicles will be located and seized by the Police.

How to reduce the risk of vehicle theft:

- When parking your vehicle:
 - Turn ignition off and TAKE the keys with you
 - Park in a well-lighted, attended area if possible
 - Lock all valuables in your trunk
 - Completely close and lock doors and windows
 - Turn your wheels to the side to make it harder to tow
- When at home:
 - If you have a garage, use it and lock it
 - If you have a rear-wheel drive car, back into driveway
 - If you have a front-wheel drive car, park front end first
 - Always set the emergency brake
 - Don't leave the ownership or insurance cards in the vehicle when unattended
 - Drop business cards or address labels inside doors to assist with vehicle identification

Other important tips

- Never hide a spare key in the vehicle, thieves know where to find it
- Be aware of your surroundings while driving and drive with your doors locked
- Be aware when purchasing a vehicle. If the deal sounds too good to be true ♦ It probably is!

If your vehicle is stolen...

1. Report the theft to the police immediately
2. If your car or accessories are stolen, the police will need specific information to identify the car, parts and accessories.

You should record the following:

- Year and Make, Model, Colour(s)
- Licence Number
- Vehicle Identification Number
- Serial numbers of all special equipment
- Special markings - dents, scratches, other damage etc.

Invest in vehicle protection whenever possible

Ignition Kill Switch - Toggle switch spliced into ignition that disables your vehicle.

Fuel Kill Switch - Switch spliced into fuel system wiring that halts fuel supply to your vehicle.

Steering Wheel Lock - Prevents steering wheel from turning.

Gearshift Lock - Locks gearshift in place, disables shifting transmission.

Tire/Wheel Locks - Tool wraps around tire/wheel to immobilize vehicle.

Hood Locks - Prevents access to vehicle engine parts.

Steering Column Collar - Protects steering column from ignition entry.

Electronic Alarms - Alarms with kill switches are the most effective.

Vehicle Tracking Systems - A transmitter in your vehicle enables your vehicle to be tracked electronically.

For more information regarding Auto Theft - please contact the Crime Prevention Officer at your local Police Division or the Toronto Police Auto Squad.