

An Garda Síochána

Crime Prevention Information Sheet



Vehicle Security

Motor Cars & Jeeps



Introduction

For most persons, our car is generally the second largest purchase we make and it is therefore important to protect your investment by keeping it safe and secure.

On average, each year in Ireland over 10,000 vehicles are stolen. Most are recovered, albeit damaged in many cases, but some are never recovered. A similar figure applies to theft from vehicles.

Parking in Public Areas

Theft from cars and other vehicles is a common crime in Ireland today. Ideally, **property should not be left unattended in cars or other vehicles.** However, if you must, please bear in mind the following -

- Ensure all windows are closed and all doors are locked
- Ensure that your alarm / immobiliser is set
- Do not leave property on view inside your vehicle



- Do not leave cash, credit/debit cards, cheque books or other valuable items inside your vehicle
- Do not leave personal documents (driving licence, insurance certificate, utility bills, bank statements etc.) as this can facilitate identity theft or lead criminals to your home address

- Be particularly careful with laptops, mobile phones and other small electronic items as the data they contain may be very attractive to the thief
- Do not place property under the seat - it is not a secure location and can often be seen
- If you must store property in your vehicle, place it in the boot but do so at a location other than the area where you intend to park
- Avoid parking in isolated places and, at night-time, park in a well-lit area
- Consider retracting, where possible, your wing mirrors as flush as possible to the doors to avoid criminal damage

Parking at Home

The above recommendations equally apply when parking at home. If you have a garage, park your vehicle inside it and keep your garage locked.

Driving

While driving, be alert to your surroundings.

- Keep all doors and windows locked.
- Keep valuables out of sight - do not leave briefcases, handbags, coats etc. on seats in open view.



**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON THIS OR OTHER CRIME PREVENTION ISSUES,
PLEASE CONTACT
your local GARDÁ CRIME PREVENTION OFFICER
or
visit the Garda website at www.garda.ie**

Security Devices

Immobilisers and Alarms -

Most modern cars are all fitted with immobilisers and alarms. If you do not have an immobiliser, consider fitting one.

Mechanical Locking Devices

Various types of locking devices are available that fit onto and/or around steering wheels, gear sticks, brake/clutch pedals etc. These all help to deter vehicle theft. Lockable wheel nuts have proved effective against the theft of wheels, particularly high value alloy wheels. Lockable petrol caps are also available.

Tracking Systems -

The use of tracking systems greatly help in recovering vehicles that have been stolen, usually within hours of their theft.

Etching

All glass surfaces - windscreen, rear window, side windows and headlamps - should have your car registration number etched onto them. This can help to deter thieves as it makes it more difficult and costly to sell or off-load the vehicle. It is also a good idea to place a small sticker on windows to indicate that these glass surfaces have been etched.

Keys

Most modern cars are difficult to steal without keys.

- When you leave your car, even for short periods, do not leave keys in the ignition. This applies both in public and private areas including your own driveway, at filling stations, shops etc.
- Do not leave car keys in open view on kitchen or hall tables, window sills, counter tops or on wall hooks etc., particularly within reach of the front door. It is not uncommon for thieves to remove keys using a 'fishing rod' or similar through the letterbox.
- At bed-time, take keys with you if you have no other secure location but remember, if challenged, that your personal safety, and that of your family, is more important than protecting your car.
- Do not attach a tag to your key ring which shows your name and address.
- **Remember** - if you inadvertently leave your keys in an unattended vehicle it may compromise your insurance cover.

Satellite Navigation Equipment (Sat Navs)

Sat Navs are becoming very popular and as a result are being targeted by thieves. The following guidelines can help to reduce the risk of your equipment being stolen -

- Avoid leaving portable Sat Navs in your vehicle
- Take them with you when leaving your car including the support cradle and suction pads
- Wipe away any suction pad marks left on the dashboard or windscreen
- Security mark your Sat Nav with your vehicle reg-

istration number

- Do not programme your Sat Nav to indicate your home



Car-jacking

There is no such crime as 'car-jacking'. However, the term is commonly applied to instances where drivers are forcibly removed from their vehicles and their car is stolen. In some instances thieves have demanded money from owners for the return of their vehicle. The incidences of 'car-jacking' are rare in Ireland; however, they do occur and so one should be vigilant at all times.

- Be alert to your surroundings and people approaching your vehicle.
- Keep your doors locked and windows closed.
- If possible, avoid quiet streets and roads, particularly after dark.
- When stopped in traffic, always leave room between you and the vehicle in front to facilitate an emergency getaway. Avoid being 'boxed-in'.

Remember - a car, no matter how valuable, is not worth the risk of serious injury.

The advice contained in this information sheet is not intended to be exhaustive or absolute.

Nothing contained in this publication should be interpreted as mandatory, obligatory or designed to conflict with any statutory regulations.

Useful Contacts and Links

**The Garda National Crime Prevention Unit,
Garda H.Q., Harcourt Square, Dublin 2.
Tel: (01) 6663362, Fax: (01) 6663314
Email: crime_prevention@garda.ie**

An Garda Síochána
www.garda.ie

The Society of the Irish Motor Industry
www.simi.ie