

How Not To Be A Victim of Vehicle Theft:

ALWAYS:

- ☞ Lock your car
- ☞ Close windows tightly
- ☞ Park in a well-lighted public area
- ☞ Turn your front wheels toward the curb to make towing more difficult when you park on a public street
- ☞ Drop your business card or address labels into the door window channels to help identify stolen auto parts

NEVER:

- ☞ Leave your car running and unattended
- ☞ Leave valuables visible in your vehicle to tempt thieves
- ☞ Let a prospective buyer test drive your car alone
- ☞ Leave your driver's license, registration, insurance card, or credit cards in your vehicle because they can be used by thieves to commit other crimes
- ☞ Hide a key in your vehicle

For more information on how to prevent vehicle theft, please contact:

Clearwater Police Department
(813) 562-4242

Important Information About My Car

Make _____

Year _____

Model _____

VIN # _____

Tag # _____

Colors _____

Insurance Co. _____

Policy # _____

Key # _____

Modifications _____

What if my car gets stolen?

- ❖ Don't Panic
- ❖ Report theft to the Police Department immediately
- ❖ Notify your insurance company
- ❖ Check with neighbors for possible witnesses
- ❖ Locate serial numbers of any personal property in the vehicle

Clearwater Police Department



AUTO THEFT PREVENTION

HOW BIG A PROBLEM IS VEHICLE THEFT?

- ◆ *In the United States during 1993, thieves stole 1,561,047 vehicles valued at over \$7.5 billion.*
- ◆ *122,839 vehicles were stolen in Florida in 1994.*
- ◆ *For 1994, the Tampa Bay Area has one of the highest vehicle theft rates in the country.*

Whether your car is taken by a "joyrider" or a "professional" thief, all that person needs is OPPORTUNITY and two to three minutes.



In case you are not familiar with the terms "joyrider" and "professional" in reference to vehicle theft, here are a couple of definitions for you –

Joyrider: The typical joyrider usually isn't old enough to drive legally. He or she may steal a car for transportation and then use it in committing other crimes. Cars taken by

joyriders are usually kept for a couple of days and then abandoned.

Professional: This term refers to the more experienced thief who works with a network of other thieves. Vehicles stolen by the professional are rarely recovered – they are quickly shipped out of the country or dismantled and sold as parts.

VEHICLE THEFT PREVENTION DEVICES

Costing from under \$100 and going higher as options are added, anti-theft systems typically include siren alarms, starter disablers, motion sensors, remote control activation, panic buttons, and shock detectors on doors, windows, or trunk lids. A beeper can alert the owner when someone trips the system.

However, spending money on anti-theft devices does **NOT** work if drivers don't also help by following basic precautions – locking their cars and taking the keys, for example – and actually using their installed theft devices.



Some Examples of Theft Prevention Devices and Methods:

VIN Etch – The Vehicle Identification Number Etch method chemically imprints the vehicle identification number (VIN) into the vehicle's glass windows. This method is effective because marked auto parts are traceable and not as easily sold as unmarked parts.

Collar – The collar is a steel protector permanently bolted and glued to the steering column. Installation of this type of device makes it nearly impossible for thieves to pry open the steering column to access the ignition lock.

Ignition Kill Switch – This device is installed in the vehicle's interior. When the switch is activated by the owner, the car cannot be started – even with the regular ignition key.

Steering Wheel Lock – This device is a hardened steel rod that locks to the steering wheel and prevents the wheel from being turned more than a few degrees.

Radio Transmitter – This anti-theft system includes a radio transmitter which is installed in a secret place within the vehicle body. If the car is stolen, the transmitter is activated by radio so that the stolen vehicle can be located via a radio homing device in the transmitter.