



Neighborhood Watch Groups of Syracuse

“Motor Vehicle Larceny Prevention Tips”

Larceny Prevention Tips

A Larceny from a Motor Vehicle is one of the easiest crimes to prevent if you follow a few simple steps. Thieves walk through parking lots or neighborhoods looking for that “Crime of Opportunity” where they can steal something quickly which can be sold for cash. This crime can take place under a minute at any time of day or night. Methods used to gain access to your vehicle include entering through an unlocked door, open window, or simply breaking the glass and reaching inside. Below are a few tips for you to follow which will reduce your chances of becoming a victim.



- Never leave valuables including bags, purses, wallets, laptops, cell phones, loose change, etc. in plain view.
- Remove all items, regardless of value, from your vehicle.
- Hide chargers and accessories that indicate a mobile phone or other electronic device may be hidden in your vehicle.
- Remove garage door openers, key fobs, and keys from your motor vehicle. Thieves may try using your garage door opener at a later time to gain access to your home.
- Before leaving your vehicle, always remove the key, roll up windows, lock doors, and set the alarm if you have one.
- If you must leave something in your vehicle lock it in the trunk out of sight.

Rim & Tire Theft Prevention

When it comes to stealing rims and tires from a motor vehicle time is a thief’s worst enemy. The longer it takes the greater the chances they will be caught. If thieves feel they will have to spend too much time on your vehicle they will move to an easier target. Below is a list of tips for you to use which will help make your vehicle less attractive to potential thieves.

- When possible, park your vehicle inside your garage. Lock both the vehicle and garage.
- Park your vehicle as far away from the road or sidewalk as possible.
- Park in well-lit areas.
- Vehicle alarm systems with a motion sensor work best. Most factory installed alarms only work when a door is opened.
- When parking your vehicle for the night turn your front tires all the way to the right or left. This makes it difficult for thieves to remove the lug nuts and get the wheel out of the fender well. In most cases thieves want to steal all four rims and tires.
- If there is more than one vehicle in your family park them side-by-side close to each other. This reduces the space thieves need to work. You can also park close to your home.

- Take close-up pictures of your rims. If needed, they can be used for identification since they will show scratches and marks.
- Adding locking lug nuts, one per rim, helps deter or slow down thieves.
- Mark your rims, preferably on the inside, with an identification number. Identifiers such as a license plate number or a Vehicle Identification Number (V.I.N) can be used by Law Enforcement to locate the owner. **NEVER** mark your rims with personal numbers.
- All tires sold in the United States are required to have a Department of Transportation Tire Identification Number branded on the sidewall. Writing down or taking pictures of each tire's D.O.T number can be helpful when identifying your rims and tires.

Be Aware of Your Surroundings

- Have your keys ready when approaching your vehicle. Do a quick scan of the interior before entering the vehicle.
- Be aware of activity near or around your vehicle.
- Be aware of people who may be following you as you're walking to your vehicle.
- Remember, a carjacking can occur at any time of the day or night in any neighborhood. Lock your doors once you are inside.
- Know your location. This will be helpful in the event you need assistance

Be Aware of Potential Dangers

- Beware of individuals who approach your vehicle asking for directions, change, giving out flyers, or asking for a ride.
- When stopped at a traffic light, be sure to leave enough space between you and the vehicle in front so you can pull away if necessary.

Avoiding Potential Dangers

- If you see suspicious activities or individuals stay in your vehicle and call 911.
- Always lock your doors even when driving.
- Never leave your vehicle unattended with the keys or key fob inside.
- Avoid parking in poorly lit areas.
- If your vehicle is equipped with an alarm system, activate it whenever you leave.
- Keep all items, regardless of value, out of sight.
- Remove your house keys from your key ring when having your vehicle serviced or cleaned.
- Be cautious of individuals loitering around parking lots looking into vehicles. This activity should be reported to 911 immediately.
- If you experience trouble with your vehicle drive to a well-lit area if possible and call for assistance.