

1. Always lock your car.

Fuelling up or popping back into your house to get something are perfect examples of how easy it is to turn your back for a moment and forget your vehicle is unsecured. So get into the habit of locking your vehicle even if you're only going to be away from it for a moment. If you have a car that has a keyless entry system, make sure your key is away from your car inside the property, or invest in a secure pouch, known as a Faraday pouch, to keep it in.

2. Secure your number plates with tamper-resistant screws

The easiest way to change the identity of a stolen vehicle or avoid speeding tickets and parking tickets is to fit stolen number plates. Using security screws to attach your vehicle's number plates makes it harder for thieves to get your number. I have a supply of these, so please contact me if you would like some, free of charge.

3. Secure anything that's on the outside of your vehicle

Anything left on roof-racks, tailgate racks, holiday top boxes or in tool chests are easily stolen when the vehicle is parked. The use of cable locks, padlocks and self-locking tools chests, which are secured to the vehicle, makes them more secure, but still, don't leave things in them if you can avoid it

4. Take it with you or hide it

Your mobile phone, coins for the car park, sunglasses, packs of medication or other items that can earn quick cash are irresistible to the opportunist thief. Remember, the cost of replacing a window is often much more than that of what's stolen. And it should go without saying that wallets, handbags, purses and credit cards should never be left in an unattended vehicle.

5. Hide electrical items and leave no clues

Leaving sat nav mounts, suction cup marks on windows or cables on view gives it away that you have left a Sat Nav, smartphone or other device in your car. Even if they can't see the Sat Nav or iPad they might still break in to see if it's stored in the car, out of sight.

6. Tool theft from vans

Vans are often targeted by thieves for the tools stored inside. If you have to leave tools in a van overnight, it's a good idea to mark them clearly with your name / company name and address using paint pens and seal with a clear lacquer spray. Alternatively, you can use a variety of other property marking systems. Items that are clearly marked are less desirable and more difficult to sell on. I have a selection of 'No tools are left in this vehicle overnight' leaflets for vehicles, again, please contact me if you would like one.