

Sergeant Bob's Safe Driving Tips

Retired Police Sergeant Bob Paterson works with The McLennan Group Insurance Inc. to develop practical safety tips for CARP members.

"Don't gamble with your safety. The stakes are too high."



Reducing Vehicle Theft & Residential Break & Enter

It costs you nothing to prevent loss and damage from vehicle theft, or residential break and enter.

Many of us hang our car keys near the front door, or toss them into a front hall basket. Fast and convenient yes, but remember, the keys are now in plain view of everyone coming to your door. The keys may also be visible to prying eyes directly through a front door window.

A trained thief can defeat most car security systems quickly, but to avoid damaging the vehicle and to make a clean get-away they may prefer entering your home and taking the keys off an easily visible location. This is especially true if the car thief already knows where the keys are stored.

- Tip #1: Make your home and car less attractive to a thief by removing the stored keys from sight.** Consider storing your keys in an out-of-sight location, such as inside a closet or inside a designated kitchen drawer. This security step will reduce the car thief's temptation to enter the home, or at very least add critical time and unwanted noise to the crime.
- Tip #2: Be suspicious if an unsolicited visitor comes to your door and seems more interested in your home interior than the sales pitch!** A very short sales visit or "sorry, wrong address" combined with a fast retreat may be a clear indication that your home is being "cased" by a thief and/or accomplice who is checking for car keys hanging in plain view.
- Tip #3: Do not let strangers in your home, do not feel obligated to engage a door-to-door sales person in conversation and do not let them look into your front hall.** Do call your local police station if you are suspicious. Do gather description details of the individual and of an associated vehicle. Don't be fooled by a person carrying a clipboard or displaying a cheap name tag, it's very easy to look "official".

Who should be extra careful when it comes to car keys?

- Luxury cars and SUV models that are often selected by thieves for off-shore re-sale
- Contractors and trades trucks carrying tools and supplies
- Heavy pickup trucks attached to trailers loaded with valuable construction equipment
- Vehicles towing boats, ATVs, motorcycles etc.
- High performance / classic cars and motorcycles

For a detailed list of the most common stolen vehicles, [CLICK](#)

- Tip #4: In winter months, be mindful of your neighbourhood and be cautious when starting your frozen car and then retreating back into your home for another coffee.** This unattended vehicle situation makes the theft of a vehicle remarkably easy. Instead, use the time to remove ice and snow from the vehicle. A clear driver's view is required by law and prolonged engine idling while the defroster struggles to melt piles of snow is not great for your vehicle's engine or the environment.

Crime prevention concerns shouldn't spoil your day, but simple no-cost tips can reduce your vulnerability.



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