



COMBAT AUTO THEFT!

*Millions of dollars in merchandise are stolen from vehicles every year and the amount is steadily increasing. The total cost does not include damage to autos, the insurance costs as a result of these thefts, or the bitter disappointment of a victim. A large number of these thefts occur at night; however, they can and do occur any time the opportunity presents itself to a thief. It only takes a few seconds for a thief to break into your vehicle. The purpose of this narrative is to show you how to increase the risk to the thief. The tips given are simple, inexpensive and mainly require observing proper habits in respect to the care of your car when leaving it unattended. As with all crime prevention, the responsibility is yours. **YOU** must take charge of your affairs...the police can only advise from their experience, or add you to a long list of victims.*

Always lock your vehicle with the windows rolled up.

The harder it is for a thief to get into your car, the more likely he will move on to the next car. Almost half our thefts from inside motor vehicles involve a vehicle being left unlocked.

Don't leave anything of value inside the vehicle in plain sight.

This includes cell phones, radios, briefcases, purses, packages, compact disks, and other valuables. They should not be left in your car period, but obviously shouldn't be in view.

Items that you can't take with you should be locked in the trunk.

If you can't take your valuables with you when you leave the car, at least lock them in the trunk where they are the most difficult for a thief to locate and steal.

Don't leave your vehicle unoccupied with the keys in it.

Don't do this even for a moment. Why make it that easy for a criminal to drive off with your car? This is especially true at convenience stores or with children in the car.

If you have an anti-theft device for your vehicle...use it!

If you have a car alarm, set it. If you have steering wheel "club," lock it in place correctly.

Make sure the license plates on your car are properly secured.

Make it difficult to remove your plate by securing it tightly. When your year sticker is in place, run a razor across it several times to make it more difficult to remove in one piece.

At night, park in well lighted areas.

Not only will this deter thieves from stealing from your car, but you will also be safer when you return to your vehicle.

Report all incidents as quickly as possible to the police.

If you don't report a crime, the Police Department won't know there is a problem.

And finally, if you feel all of this advice is not worth the time or effort, you may wish to look at a map of [THEFTS FROM VEHICLE AND STOLEN VEHICLES](#) for the month of December 2002, which displays the 246 incidents reported to Police. A picture is truly worth a thousand words!