

# Best Practice Guide

## Avoiding Damage While Parked



### **Don't Be A Victim Of Damage**

Damage caused to vehicles while parked is a significant problem.

In some cases, drivers causing damage to parked vehicles will 'dent and run' leaving the victim with a damaged vehicle. This problem is escalating, with damage ranging from minor dents, nicks and scratches to broken taillights, fenders and smashed sideview mirrors.

There are a number of steps you can take to help reduce damage to your vehicle while parked.

## Consider Your Neighbors

When choosing a parking space look at the vehicles parked to either side.

Avoid parking next to:

- A vehicle with its wheels turned.
- A vehicle parked at an angle.
- A vehicle that looks badly looked after (i.e. dented and scratched). If the driver does not care about their own vehicle, they are unlikely to care about scraping yours.

## Straighten Your Wheels

Ensure your wheels are straight when you park to avoid accidentally turning into another vehicle when you pull out.

## Park Within The Lines

Park within the painted lines of a space so you are not encroaching on another space. Leaving your vehicle at an angle or over the lines will increase the risk of it being scraped or hit by other vehicles parking alongside yours.

## Keep Your Distance

Although it may seem tempting to park as close to an entrance as possible, doing so might increase the risk of your vehicle being damaged. The areas closer to buildings are much busier, with vehicles occupying most spaces and people passing by with shopping carts and strollers.

You should:

- Park further away from buildings where there are fewer vehicles and fewer pedestrians.
- Park away from shopping cart return sites to avoid damage being caused to your vehicle by 'runaway' shopping carts
- Avoid spaces that are located at the ends of rows where your vehicle could be scraped by others as they turn the corner.
- Avoid parking close to turning or delivery areas.

## Back Up

Where it is legal and safe to do so back into parking spaces so that you can drive out when you re-start your trip. It is much safer to back into a parking space than into a road or parking lot where pedestrians and vehicles may be passing.



## Look Out For Hazards

Be extremely cautious when pulling into or out of a parking space. Be aware of passing pedestrians, cars waiting to get into your space, other vehicles backing out at the same time and reckless drivers speeding through lanes.

## Parking Security

When leaving your vehicle:

- Engage the vehicle parking brake to secure the vehicle.
- Close all windows and lock the doors.
- Remove valuables from your vehicle or store them out of sight.
- Activate the alarm or immobiliser.

## On The Street

Take extra care when parking on the street and don't feel under pressure to rush your maneuver. Signal your intentions before slowing and parking.

Remember to:

- Park in the direction you are traveling
- Park close to the curb.

- Allow room for any vehicles ahead and behind to get out. Make sure you are not making it difficult for either of them to leave their spaces.
- If you park on a street with a curb and your vehicle is heading downhill, turn the front wheels towards the curb.
- If you park your car headed uphill, turn the wheels away from the curb.
- On a street without curbs turn the wheels towards the side of the road on which you are parked.
- Before leaving the vehicle, set the parking brake, lock the steering wheel and put the vehicle in first gear or in the 'park' position.



## Take Care At Night

Your personal safety comes first, so some of the guidance is slightly different when parking at night.

When parking at night:

- Park near lighting and / or cameras.
- Park in busy areas and avoid isolated areas
- Use parking areas with an attendant on duty if possible.

- P** Park within the lines.
- A** Allow time to maneuver safely.
- R** Remember to back into spaces so you drive out forwards.
- K** Keep your distance from other vehicles.
- I** It's a good idea to be selective about who you park next to.
- N** Night time parking requires extra precautions.
- G** Good trip planning includes allowing time to find parking.

## WARNING

According to the National Safety Council, approximately two-thirds of drivers say they would make phone calls while driving through parking lots.