

Best Practice Guide

Personal Security



Your Safety Is Paramount

All drivers should be aware of the potential dangers facing them while driving. Would-be thieves are ready to strike in a number of situations and it is important for drivers to be on their guard and prepared for such incidents.

There are several precautions that you can take to improve your level of security on the road.

Take Care When Alone

The risk of being involved in some kind of personal incident is much greater when travelling alone.

Avoid as many unnecessary risks as possible by:

- Planning your route to avoid the risk of getting lost.
- Avoiding quiet and poorly lit roads.
- Keeping doors locked at all times.
- Making sure you have enough fuel for your journey.
- Letting someone know your intended route and estimated time of arrival.
- Carrying a personal attack alarm.
- NEVER stopping for hitchhikers or strangers. Even if someone tries to flag you down at the roadside you should drive on then alert the police as soon as it is safe to do so.

Avoid Unfamiliar Areas

Try to plan your route to avoid dangerous areas.

If you need to drive in unfamiliar areas:

- Avoid travelling alone.
- Keep windows closed and doors locked.
- Regularly check your mirrors to look for potentially dangerous situations.
- Be aware of what is taking place all around your vehicle.

Beware In A Breakdown

If your vehicle breaks down:

- Leave it in as safe a place as possible, away from traffic.
- Switch on your hazard lights and display a warning triangle if you have one.
- Contact your breakdown service or someone who will be able to assist you.
- Wait for assistance in a safe place, away from your vehicle if possible, keeping well away from the road and other traffic.

Be Suspicious About Shunts

Vehicle thieves or 'carjackers' sometimes hit, or 'shunt', a vehicle from behind then threaten violence and steal the vehicle when the victim gets out to investigate.

If you have any suspicion that your vehicle has been bumped intentionally:

- Do not get out of your vehicle.
- Write a note or wind the window down a fraction to inform the other driver that you intend to travel to the nearest police station. Alternatively call the police from a mobile.
- Do not open the window if the driver approaches you.

Keep Your Keys Close

When leaving your vehicle - even if only for a few moments - always lock the doors and take the keys with you. Thieves are often on the lookout for drivers leaving their vehicles unlocked, particularly in petrol stations and close to shopping areas.



Hide Your Valuables

You should always hide any valuables when parking or leaving your vehicle unattended but should also get into the habit of keeping valuables out of sight at all other times.

Opportunist thieves could spot a laptop or mobile phone on your seat while you are stopped at traffic lights or moving slowly in a traffic jam. It only takes a few seconds for someone to open the door of your vehicle and steal a valuable item.

Park With Care

When you park your vehicle it is vulnerable to being targeted by thieves.

To help deter would-be thieves:

- Lock all doors.
- Use the vehicle's alarm if it has one and apply a steering / wheel lock if you have one.
- Park in areas with CCTV or an attendant on duty if possible.
- Choose a well-lit area if parking at night.
- Avoid back streets and other secluded areas.



Vary Your Stops

If you regularly drive long distances along the same route you should vary the locations in which you take a break to prevent would-be thieves from becoming familiar with your routine.

If possible:

- Take breaks at busy places such as diners or cafes.
- Park your vehicle within your sight while you are stopped.
- Avoid talking about your vehicle or its contents while in earshot of other customers.

- S** Shunts can be a ploy by carjackers.
- E** Ensure you keep valuables hidden.
- C** Consider your safety when choosing a place to park.
- U** Use your alarm and other safety features when leaving your vehicle.
- R** Remember to put your safety first in a breakdown.
- I** If possible keep windows closed and doors locked at all times.
- T** Try to avoid driving in unfamiliar areas.
- Y** You must avoid all unnecessary risks.

WARNING

If approached by a thief or attacker while in your vehicle, always DO WHAT THEY SAY.

While no one wants to give up their vehicle without a fight you should never take any risks and should remember that vehicles are replaceable - your life is not!