

## Protect Your License Plates

- License plates are frequently stolen and then attached to cars used in other crimes. Get in the habit of checking your license plates before you drive. A few drops of solder on the bolts or blurring the threads can help safeguard your plates from theft.

## Avoid Buying A Stolen Vehicle

- Verify that the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) plate is intact and compare it to the VIN on the ownership document. The VIN consists of 17 numbers and letters and is commonly located at the base of the front windshield, on the driver's side, or on the driver's side doorjamb.
- You can call the police at the non-emergency number to verify if a vehicle is stolen by providing the license plate and / or VIN.
- Be wary when purchasing used auto parts - you could be patronizing a "chop shop", where the stolen auto parts are sold, and indirectly encouraging auto theft.

**No vehicle is 100% theft-proof. However, the more difficult it is to steal the car, the less likely you are to be a victim of this crime.**

## Important information police will need:

- License plate number, year, make, model, color and/or vehicle identification number:

Year \_\_\_\_\_

Make \_\_\_\_\_

Model \_\_\_\_\_

Color \_\_\_\_\_

License Plate # \_\_\_\_\_

VIN \_\_\_\_\_

- If there is suspect information, please provide as much information about the assailants as possible: Gender, race, age, height, weight, hair and eye color, clothing description, and direction of travel if known.

**The Santa Ana Police Department is working hard to fight auto theft. You can help by making sure your car is always locked and by following the tips in this brochure. Together we can reduce the chances of your car being stolen.**

**SANTA ANA POLICE  
DEPARTMENT  
Non-Emergency Phone Number  
(714) 834-4211**

# Help Prevent the Theft of Your Car !



**Santa Ana  
Police Department**



**PAUL M. WALTERS  
CHIEF OF POLICE**



## Tips On Protecting Your Vehicle

- Inspect your vehicle's ignition to ensure that it is in good working condition and that can't be turned on without the proper key.
- Lock your car and pocket the key when you leave - even if it's just for a minute. Close the windows all the way and make sure the trunk is closed and locked.
- Never leave your car running unattended, even for a short time.
- The use of anti-theft devices can be an effective and inexpensive method in the prevention of vehicle theft. Many insurance companies offer reduced rates to owners who install security systems such as steering wheel locks, alarms, vehicle tracking systems and switches that interrupt the fuel or electronic systems.
- Control your keys. Never leave an identification tag on your key ring. If your keys are lost or stolen, it could help a thief locate your car or even burglarize your home.
- Don't leave packages in plain sight. Make sure they are out of sight or locked in your trunk.
- If you have a garage, use it. Lock both the vehicle and the garage.
- If you see suspicious persons or activity, notify your local police.

It is an unfortunate fact that criminals in our community steal cars, however many residents are not aware that most stolen cars are *not* new. Many criminals prefer vehicles that blend into the neighborhood so that they will be less likely to be stopped by the police. Criminals might use a stolen car to commit a crime or simply as temporary transportation.

Although most car owners will not have their car stolen, any car, *including yours*, could be the target of an auto thief. Fortunately, there are a number of steps you can take to reduce the chances of your vehicle being stolen. Most auto thieves want to work quickly and quietly in order to take your car without being noticed. By using one or more of the devices described in this brochure, you can make it harder for someone to steal your vehicle and encourage them to look for an easier target.



## Use Anti-Theft Devices



- **Steering Wheel Lock** - prevents the steering wheel from being turned properly.
- **Alarm System** - sounds an alarm when a door, hood, or trunk is opened. Optional equipment includes glass, motion, tampering, and towing sensors.
- **Vehicle Tracking** - A silent transmitter hidden in the car that enables a police to track the car after it is reported stolen.
- **Ignition Kill Switch** - an inexpensive toggle switch attached to the ignition or starter.
- **Fuel Kill Switch** - a valve that prevents the flow of fuel.
- **Hood Lock** - prevents potential thieves from gaining access to the security system and battery.
- **Tire/Wheel Lock** - wraps around the wheel and prevents the vehicle from moving.
- **Floorboard Lock** - disables the gas or brake pedal.
- **Gearshift Lock** - disables shifting of the transmission by locking it in place.

