



## The myths and realities of vehicle theft

**Myth:** "It won't happen to me."

**Reality:** One out of every 120 Australian households had a vehicle stolen in the last 12 months. Yes, it could happen to you.

**Myth:** "No one would want to steal my old bomb."

**Reality:** The majority of stolen vehicles are more than 10 years old. Your bomb is at greater risk than many other cars, particularly if it isn't fitted with a quality engine immobiliser.

**Myth:** "My car is insured so it doesn't matter if it gets stolen."

**Reality:** Research indicates that, on average, victims of opportunistic theft incur \$5,000 in out of pocket expenses. Victims report that mechanical and body damage, up-front excess payments and the loss of work tools, sporting equipment, stereos, personal navigation devices and CDs often result in costs far beyond insurance coverage. Having a car stolen can also often be a very emotional experience for victims. Some reported losing photographs and other personal items that can't be replaced while others regretted their car being used in neighbourhood burglaries or injuring innocent people. Many victims feel violated, and remain concerned about becoming a victim of theft again.

**Myth:** "If thieves want my car they'll get it no matter what I do."

**Reality:** Most thefts are a matter of opportunity. Opportunists take advantage of easy targets like older cars that they can 'hotwire' or a set of keys left in an ignition or just lying around. These thieves will be deterred by the security of an engine immobiliser and a lack of opportunity to get hold of a vehicle's keys.

## Who we are

The National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council (NMVTRC) is an independent, non-profit organisation established by Australian governments and the insurance industry. The NMVTRC works with its partners to reduce Australia's unacceptably high level of vehicle theft and the associated costs of this crime to the community.

Our Council is drawn from the major national bodies whose systems and practices have a direct impact on vehicle theft. This includes government justice and transport agencies, insurers, vehicle manufacturers, the motor trades and motoring associations.

To find out more visit [www.carsafe.com.au](http://www.carsafe.com.au)



National Motor Vehicle  
Theft Reduction Council  
*driving down vehicle theft*

50-52 Howard Street  
North Melbourne, Victoria 3051 Australia  
T 03 9348 9600 F 03 9348 9988  
[info@carsafe.com.au](mailto:info@carsafe.com.au) [www.carsafe.com.au](http://www.carsafe.com.au)

An initiative of Australian governments and the insurance industry

## WISH YOU'D SECURED YOUR CAR



Like most people, your car is essential to daily life. You may rely on it for shopping, getting to and from uni, taking the kids to school, social activities or work. Last year almost 60,000 Australian victims of theft found out the hard way, just how difficult life can be without a vehicle.

## Car safe tips

You can reduce the risk of theft by following these tips:

### Park wisely

- If you have off street parking, use it! Even better, park behind lockable gates or in a locked garage. Parking on the street greatly increases the risk of theft.
- At night, park in a well lit area. Opportunists will often look for an unsecured car to get them around or home after a night out.
- Use secure parking facilities where they are available.
- In car parks where you must leave the keys, ask the operator how the keys will be secured.

### Remove temptation

- When leaving your vehicle unattended, fully close the windows, lock all the doors and take the keys with you.
- Theft from cars is very common. Never leave items such as mobile phones, bags, MP3 players, sunglasses or other valuables in sight in your unattended vehicle. If you have a portable navigation device, be sure to remove both the unit and the suction mark from the windscreen. If you need to leave valuables in your car, hide them before you get to where you are going.

### Secure your vehicle

- Steering locks provide an effective visual deterrent. But, because they take time and effort to fit, they are all too often left on the floor of the vehicle rather than fitted to the steering wheel. Furthermore, many can be easily defeated.
- For maximum protection, an engine immobiliser that meets Australian Standard 4601:1999 provides the most effective deterrent to opportunistic theft. Quality immobilisers require no effort to activate and are available for as little as \$220 (recommended retail price), including installation under the CAR-SAFE *Immobilise Now!* program.

### Protect your keys

- An Australian Standards approved immobiliser provides the most effective protection from vehicle theft you can get. But, while it is mandatory for all vehicles manufactured after 2001 to be fitted with an equivalent immobiliser as standard, they can offer no protection if a thief has access to your keys.

"I'm a labourer. I ended up losing my job 'cause I couldn't get there, I was devastated"

"I had to take out a loan for the car. Now all I own is a set of keys and a giant debt! I don't know what I will do"

## Key theft – the facts

Only one in five vehicles stolen has an engine immobiliser fitted, with the overwhelming majority of these vehicles stolen by the thief gaining access to the key.

70 per cent of late model vehicle thefts are via keys, with one in five of these being with keys that have been left in the ignition. Keys remain the primary means to steal a vehicle with an immobiliser. If your car is worth \$10,000, \$20,000 or \$30,000 then that could be the value of your keys to a thief.

- Never leave your car unattended with the key in the ignition. Many cars are stolen from petrol stations, corner stores and driveways where the owner has left the car with the key in the ignition, often for less than a minute.
- Don't leave keys lying around on tables, benches or key hooks. If a thief can see your unattended keys, it is likely that he or she can figure out how to get hold of them.
- Never hide a second set of keys anywhere on your car: thieves know where to look.
- A good rule is that if the car is at home but you are out make sure all the keys are with you.
- Remember, it is a road rule offence to not turn off the engine and remove the keys from the ignition if you are leaving your vehicle unattended.

## A word about safety

Never leave children or animals locked in an unattended vehicle.

If you have any information on stolen vehicles contact Crime Stoppers anonymous hotline on 1800 333 000.