

Automobile Security

Before getting into your vehicle

- * Take a few seconds to inspect your vehicle before getting into it.
- * Walk completely around your vehicle looking for:
 - * Objects placed in the path of your tires or on top of your tires.
 - * Fingerprints (if your car is dusty) around the doors, trunk or hood areas of the vehicles.
 - * Wires protruding from the doors, hood, trunk or gasoline cap.
 - * Pieces of cut wire or electrical tape lying on the ground beneath or near your vehicle.
 - * Signs of forced entry.
- * Look into the back seat to ensure that the car is empty.

Driving your vehicle

- * Vary your routes to and from work and vary your departure and arrival times frequently by at least 30 minutes. Be systematically unsystematic.
- * Avoid parking in unsecured areas and places that will be unlit at night.
- * Be aware of your surroundings, know who is pulling along side of you. You should also be watching what is taking place 3 blocks ahead of you.
- * While you're driving, be prepared to take evasive actions. Play the "what if game" and

think of what evasive action you would take if the persons in the car next to you suddenly started shooting at you.

- * Remember that your vehicle is a 2,000 pound weapon and can be used very effectively against attackers. Be prepared to take action.
- * Be alert for motorcycles or bicycles stopping next to your car, particularly if there are two riders.

Riding in a Taxi

- * Before getting in, make an obvious point of looking at the license number. If possible, have another person make note of the number before you depart.
- * Don't get into a taxi if:
 - * The inside door locks and handles are not working.
 - * It is occupied by anyone else in addition to the driver.
 - * It is dirty or the license plates are obscured.
- * While you are in route:
 - * Establish a rapport with your driver.
 - * Do not allow the driver to pick up unknown passengers.
 - * Stay alert.
 - * Be prepared to take evasive actions.
 - * Be prepared to stop the driver and get out of the vehicle if the driver is not using main streets, if he is driving in the wrong direction, or using alleys and shortcuts.

Carjacking Prevention

- * Be aware. When you are out in public, be aware of your surroundings.
- * Choose well-lighted, well-traveled facilities. If you are stopping to use a public facility such as a pay phone or gas station, try to park in a well-lighted place.
- * When returning home, be aware of all vehicles and pedestrians. Keep your house and driveway well lighted. Beep your horn, and have someone inside turn on lights or open the door.
- * When driving in a potentially risky area, use the middle lane. Don't allow yourself to be pinned against the curb at a light or stop sign. Leave enough space between cars at a red light or stop sign to pull away if necessary.
- * Don't be distracted by eating, drinking or talking while driving. Losing your focus on the road and your surroundings could make you an easy target.
- * Be careful after a minor rear-end accident. If you are bumped from behind and you do not feel comfortable exiting your vehicle, motion to the other driver and drive to the nearest police station, 24-hour store, hospital or fire station.
- * Keep your vehicle locked and, if practical, the windows rolled up.
- * When approaching your parked car, have your car keys in your hand. Check the surrounding area for suspicious persons near your car or following you. If you see a suspicious person, do not attempt to get in your car but walk to the nearest public place and call for help.
- * Don't make yourself even more attractive as a victim by leaving your purse or other valuables in view while you're driving.
- * Plan your route in advance and know something about the area you'll be driving through. There are some areas that aren't safe, day or night.
- * A reminder for general safety: Always keep your car well maintained and make sure you have plenty of gas. You don't want to become stranded in a dark, unfamiliar or questionable area, and thus vulnerable to other types of crime.
- * If you are forced to pull over due to mechanical problems, be wary of people who stop and offer help.
- * Keep your house keys on a separate ring from your car keys.
- * Never roll down your window to answer questions of passersby. This could be a pretext for a gunman to take your vehicle.
- * The most important rule is; if a gunman wants your car, give it up.

Driving in Rain or Fog

Car Handling Tips

* Keep your headlights on low beam to reduce glare.

* Slow down. Watch for mud, sand and oil slicks. Keep your speed low until you get the feel of the road.

* Keep your windshield wipers and defroster on.

* Tap your brake pedal to alert drivers behind that you are slowing.

* Avoid sudden stops or quick turns. Pump brakes to bring the car to a

gradual stop without skidding or swerving.

* If you go into a skid, do not slam on the brakes. Instead, turn your steering wheel in the same direction as the skid, pump brakes, then steer to straighten the car.

* Drive slowly through patches of wet leaves which can be as slippery as mud or ice.

* Pull off the road until weather conditions improve.