

## Ways To Avoid Being A Victim Of Crime When Parking Your Car

In our fast paced modern living we probably don't give the practice of parking our cars as much thought as we should. As a society, we need to practice common sense when we park our cars, as we should do in other areas of our behavior.

There are two categories of crimes involving the action of parking a car. One is property crime and the second is crime against a person. Below is a description of some crimes in both categories associated with parking cars. There are also recommendations of actions we can take to lessen the chances that we become victims of crime and a statistic.

### Theft and Vandalism:

The rate of theft or vandalism to cars increases in poorly thought out parking designs or arrangements. Seclusion and darkness are the best friends of auto thieves and vandals.

Wherever possible, make available to each dwelling its own locked garage within the property boundaries. Locked garages outside the boundaries or well-lit and visible common car parking areas are the next best things.

Where private garages are not feasible, carport or driveway parking is preferable to grouped parking away from dwellings.

As a rule, it is recommended that you avoid underground or multi-story parking garages, as they are breeding grounds for vandalism and crime. If they already exist, limiting access points and providing them with sturdy locked gates could help minimize risk. On the other hand, each resident could be provided with a lockable garage in their own space, with robust vandal proof metal doors, garages within garages, so to speak. Or users can be provided with a secure lock or a plastic keycard, which operates electronic doors or gates.

Grouped car parking areas should be avoided in high-crime areas. If they can't be avoided, they should be within view of some dwellings; they should be outfitted with sturdy gates and should never be located near alleyways.

Open car parking areas should be small and within view of dwellings. Visitors' car parking areas should be clearly identifiable, well lit, and also visible from dwellings.

### Rape, Assault, Robbery:

Poorly planned parking areas increase the risk of physical assault and robbery against the car owner and to the public.

To make car-parking sites safer to the car owners and drivers, planners should provide direct access from parking areas to the entrance of dwellings.

Car parking sites should be no further than 60 meters from dwellings, and the path should be well lit and free from shrubbery. Shrubby that blocks the view is a criminal's best friend.

If it is desirable to limit access to dwellings, make sure access via car parking sites is monitored as well.

In high-crime areas, advanced technological surveillance methods [CCTV, voice alarms, infrared, etc.] may be needed in car parking areas. For example, an infrared unit is available which detects the presence of intruders [but not cats and dogs] by body heat, and automatically switches on all lights in the car parking area and turns them off after 15 to 20 minutes has passed.

There are very few areas of our existence that cannot be made safer just by applying some common sense and following precautionary guidelines.

Make safety and self defense your first priority today. Take the time to go over these guidelines with all your family and set a good example. Remember, thoughts and intentions are great but nothing is done unless you take action. Don't hesitate. Do it.

Source: <http://www.articlecircle.com>

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