



## Reducing Your Car Theft Risk

(NAPSA)—To protect your car from theft, it can be important to know how at risk you are. On average, one out of every 153 registered motor vehicles is stolen nationwide. The annual cost of vehicle theft to consumers, including insurance premiums, is approximately \$7 billion.

While Honda Accords and Toyota Camrys are the most often stolen cars, according to a recent report by the National Insurance Crime Bureau, all vehicles are at risk.

There are a number of things you can do to keep your car to yourself. For example, a surprising number of cars are stolen with the keys in the ignition, left by a driver taking a minute to stop at an ATM or to grab a cup of coffee.

“This is primarily a crime of opportunity; these are not professional car thieves,” said Lt. Dave Grassi of the Erie, Pennsylvania Police Department. “Juveniles see a car left running and unattended and think, ‘This will be easier than I thought.’”

Here are some more tips to keep your car from being a target:

- Park in well-lit areas, preferably in attended lots. If you have to leave your key with an attendant, leave only the ignition and door key.

- Don't leave valuables in plain view.

- If your vehicle is rear-wheel drive, back into your driveway to make towing more difficult for thieves. Conversely, if your vehicle is front-wheel drive, pull forward into your driveway.



**Don't leave your car running when you step out; a thief only needs a minute to drive off.**

- If you have access to a garage, use it. Lock the garage door as well as your vehicle.

- Foil thieves with ignition kill switches, which prevent the engine from starting, or fuel kill switches, which halt the fuel supply.

- Floorboard locks disable the gas or brake pedal and prevent the use of these pedals, and gear-shift locks to disable the clutch, preventing shifting of the transmission. Tire or wheel locks can also be used to prevent the vehicle from moving.

- Invest in a brightly-colored steering wheel lock such as The Club, which prevents the steering wheel from being turned and can be a deterrent that encourages thieves to move on to more vulnerable vehicles. It might even qualify you for an insurance discount. The Club is recommended by the Fraternal Order of Police.

For more information and tips, go to [www.theclub.com](http://www.theclub.com).