



Auto Theft and Theft from Auto

Motor Vehicle Theft is a frequent crime. In fact, statistics show that about every 23 seconds a motor vehicle is stolen in the United States. A major contributing factor in many of these cases is: keys left inside the vehicle. Theft from Motor Vehicle is also frequent crime in our area that can easily be prevented.

Chief Randy Scott and the Columbia Police Department are providing 7 simple tips to help you avoid becoming a victim of these crimes:

1. Never leave your car running, even if you will only be gone for a minute. Vehicles are commonly stolen at convenience stores, gas stations, ATM's, etc. Many vehicles are also stolen on cold mornings when the owner leaves the vehicle running to warm up in their own driveway.
2. Always take your keys. Never leave them in the car. Many of the vehicles stolen had the keys left in them.
3. Always lock your car. The majority of all vehicles stolen or broken into were left unlocked.
4. Never hide a second set of keys in your car. Extra keys can easily be found if a car thief takes time to look.
5. Park in well-lighted areas. Many vehicle thefts and theft from vehicles occur at night.
6. Park in attended lots. Auto thieves do not like witnesses and prefer unattended, dimly lit parking lots.
7. Don't make your car attractive to thieves by leaving valuables in plain sight. Take them inside.

Both of these are crimes of opportunity that with a prevention effort, can be avoided. While we make every effort to deter these crimes, we still need the help of the community by being vigilant and reporting suspicious activity and by taking good preventative measures. To report criminal activity, call The Columbia Police Department at (803) 545-3500 or CrimeStoppers at 1-888-CRIME-SC.

For additional crime prevention tips, visit our website at www.columbiapd.net