

rant.²⁸² “[T]he justification to conduct such a warrantless search does not vanish once the car has been immobilized; nor does it depend upon a reviewing court’s assessment of the likelihood in each particular case that the car would have been driven away, or that its contents would have been tampered with, during the period required for the police to obtain a warrant.”²⁸³ Because of the lessened expectation of privacy, inventory searches of impounded automobiles are justifiable in order to protect public safety and the owner’s property, and any evidence of criminal activity discovered in the course of the inventories is admissible in court.²⁸⁴ The Justices were evenly divided, however, on the propriety of warrantless seizure of an arrestee’s automobile from a public parking lot several hours after his arrest, its transportation to a police impoundment lot, and the taking of tire casts and exterior paint scrapings.²⁸⁵

Police in undertaking a warrantless search of an automobile may not extend the search to the persons of the passengers therein²⁸⁶ unless there is a reasonable suspicion that the passengers are armed and dangerous, in which case a *Terry* patdown is permissible,²⁸⁷ or unless there is individualized suspicion of criminal activity by the passengers.²⁸⁸ But because passengers in an automobile have no reasonable expectation of privacy in the interior area of the car, a warrantless search of the glove compartment and the spaces under the seats, which turned up evidence implicating the passengers, invaded no Fourth Amendment interest of the passengers.²⁸⁹ Luggage and other closed containers found in automobiles may also be subjected to warrantless searches based on probable cause, regardless of whether the luggage or containers belong to the driver or to

²⁸² *Michigan v. Thomas*, 458 U.S. 259 (1982). The same rule applies if it is the vehicle itself that is forfeitable contraband; police, acting without a warrant, may seize the vehicle from a public place. *Florida v. White*, 526 U.S. 559 (1999).

²⁸³ *Michigan v. Thomas*, 458 U.S. at 261. *See also* *Chambers v. Maroney*, 399 U.S. 42 (1970); *Texas v. White*, 423 U.S. 67 (1975); *United States v. Ross*, 456 U.S. 798, 807 n.9 (1982).

²⁸⁴ *Cady v. Dombrowski*, 413 U.S. 433 (1973); *South Dakota v. Opperman*, 428 U.S. 364 (1976). *See also* *Cooper v. California*, 386 U.S. 58 (1967); *United States v. Harris*, 390 U.S. 234 (1968). Police, in conducting an inventory search of a vehicle, may open closed containers in order to inventory contents. *Colorado v. Bertine*, 479 U.S. 367 (1987).

²⁸⁵ *Cardwell v. Lewis*, 417 U.S. 583 (1974). Justice Powell concurred on other grounds.

²⁸⁶ *United States v. Di Re*, 332 U.S. 581 (1948); *Ybarra v. Illinois*, 444 U.S. 85, 94–96 (1979).

²⁸⁷ *Knowles v. Iowa*, 525 U.S. 113, 118 (1998).

²⁸⁸ *Maryland v. Pringle*, 540 U.S. 366 (2003) (probable cause to arrest passengers based on officers finding \$783 in glove compartment and cocaine hidden beneath back seat armrest, and on driver and passengers all denying ownership of the cocaine).

²⁸⁹ *Rakas v. Illinois*, 439 U.S. 128 (1978).