

Motorway driving

Caravans or trailers mustn't be towed in the outside lane of a motorway that has more than two lanes, unless other lanes are closed.



Section twenty

➡ Vehicle security

This section covers

- Security measures
- Parking

➡ Security measures

Car thieves vary from opportunists to professionals who work in gangs, so it's important that you take sensible precautions and perform some basic checks before you leave your vehicle.

Having your vehicle stolen or broken into is at best an inconvenience and at worst very distressing. While determined thieves would probably be able to steal or get into any vehicle, they're usually too busy with the poorly secured ones. If your vehicle is secured, alarmed and immobilised, they may well leave it alone.

This section deals with the precautions you can take to secure your vehicle.

Modern cars come with engine immobilisers and many also have alarms fitted as standard, but there are extra precautions you can take to make it more difficult for the would-be thief.

- Use a physical immobiliser, such as a steering-wheel lock or parking-brake lock, or some other visible security device.
- Have the vehicle registration number etched on all windows.
- Install a GPS device so you can track your vehicle's location in the event of it being stolen.
- Use a Thatcham-approved vehicle marking scheme.



Vehicle Watch

Join a Vehicle Watch scheme, if there's one in your area. The scheme's high-visibility stickers, displayed on the front and rear windscreens of your vehicle, act as a deterrent to would-be thieves. There are two types of sticker

- **Vehicle Watch** By displaying this sticker you're inviting the police to stop your vehicle if they see it in use between midnight and 5.00 am
- **25-plus** By displaying this sticker you're also inviting the police to stop your vehicle at any time of day if it's being driven by anyone who appears to be under the age of 25.

Stickers and additional information about the scheme can be obtained from the crime prevention officer at your local police station.

Property registers

The police have a national record of stolen property called the National Mobile Property Register. They use this searchable record of registered owners in order to return their property in the event that it's stolen.

You can register your property through this website.
immobilise.com



➡ Parking

Avoid leaving your vehicle unattended in poorly lit areas. The risk of vehicle crime is known to be higher in these locations.

Whenever possible

- use attended and secure car parks
- at night, park in an area that will be well lit
- if you have a garage, use it.

When you leave your vehicle

- close all windows completely (but don't leave pets in a vehicle with the windows completely closed)
- remove the key
- engage the steering lock

- set the alarm or anti-theft device, if you have one
- either remove all valuables or lock them out of sight
- lock the doors.

Never leave the vehicle documents inside your vehicle.



Car parks

Using parking facilities that have won the Park Mark® Safer Parking award means that you're parking in an area that has been approved by the police. They make sure that the site has measures in place to create a safe environment.

These facilities are run by responsible operators who are concerned about your safety and the safety of your vehicle. The police will be assured that these operators have done the best they can to reduce crime and the fear of crime on their site.



To find your nearest Park Mark® awarded site, visit parkmark.co.uk and enter your postcode into the search box.



Soft-top vehicles

Never leave a cabriolet or soft-top vehicle where it will obviously be vulnerable.

REMEMBER, lock it or lose it!



Valuables

Car audio systems

Many modern cars have tuners installed as part of the dashboard, which makes them difficult for thieves to remove. Despite this, there's a large market for people who want to upgrade their car audio systems. For this reason, tuners/CD players and Bluetooth media receivers remain prime targets for thieves, so it's important to take some simple precautions every time you leave your vehicle.

- If the faceplate (the control panel with the buttons and the frequency display) is removable, take it with you. Removing it will mean that a would-be thief won't be able to power on or operate the device. You may also be able to install a removable radio. It looks exactly like any other radio, but it slides out of its housing. You can lock it away in the boot or take it with you.
- If your car audio system can't be operated without a code, don't leave the code card in the car. Memorise the code and store the card safely at home in case you forget the number.
- Prime any security devices that are installed before you leave your vehicle.
- Remove all accessories, such as adapters, audio cables and MP3 devices, from the glovebox and take them with you.

Satellite navigation systems

- If you have a portable system, take it with you when you leave the car; also take the support cradle and suction pad.
- Wipe away any marks on the windscreen or dashboard that have been left by the suction pads. These marks are a clue to would-be thieves that a device may be stored in the vehicle and they may break in to look for it.



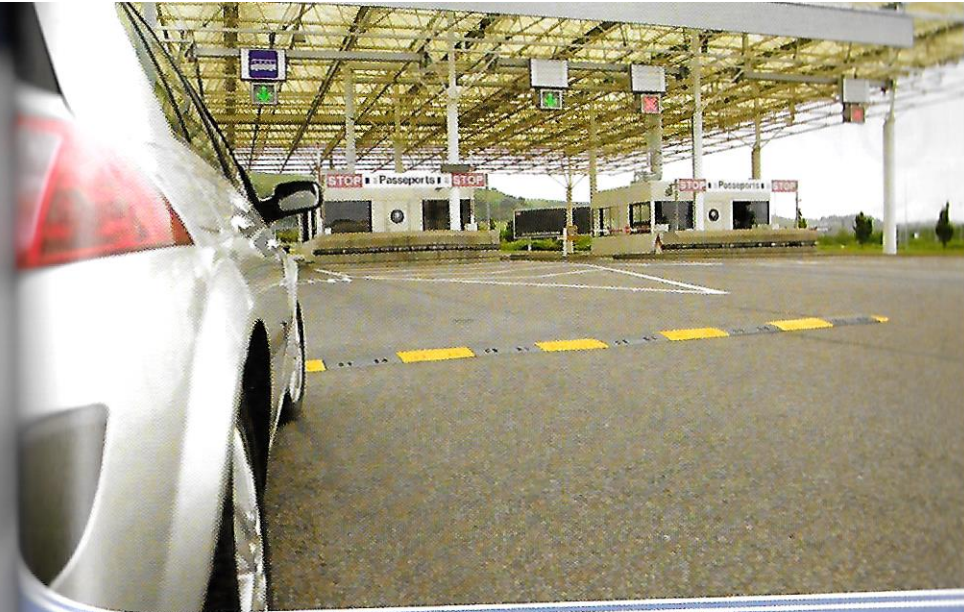
Catalytic converters

Catalytic converters contain valuable metals and have become targets for thieves. Vehicles with high ground clearance are most vulnerable to this crime, because the catalytic converter can be removed without having to jack up the vehicle.

Protect yourself from this crime by

- parking in a locked garage if possible
- parking in a well-lit area overlooked by residents
- having the catalytic converter marked with a Thatcham-approved security marking scheme.

If you see anyone acting suspiciously around or under a vehicle, report it to the police.



Section twenty-one

➔ Driving abroad

This section covers

- Planning your journey
- Driving your own vehicle
- Hiring a vehicle
- Driving in Europe
- Other things to consider