



**POLICE  
SCOTLAND**

Keeping people safe

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**POILEAS ALBA**



# Vehicle Security

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- If you have a garage “use it” and lock it. If you have gates ensure these are locked. Consider using an alarm for you garage and gates.
- Leaving items on show is an invitation – Mobile phones, electronic equipment, coins, sunglasses, tools, clothing and bags should be removed from the vehicle or placed in the boot.
- Keys and ignition fobs should be kept safe and out of sight and reach – a common way to steal a car or van is to take the keys or ignition fob, either when left in the vehicle or from your home through burglary
- Always lock and close the windows of your vehicle when unattended – on the drive, the petrol station forecourt or when parking an unlocked vehicle is the easiest to steal or steal from. When away from home, consider using a Park Mark approved car park
- Fit theft resistant number plate fittings – stolen number plates are commonly used to hide the identity of stolen vehicles. Use one-way clutch head screws to secure plates
- Use a steering wheel lock and/or a lock that fits over the gear lever. Alternatively a security box can be fitted over the pedals to prevent thefts when the vehicle is parked up
- Double check: Listen out for the sound of your doors locking, lights flashing and/or mirrors closing. If you don’t hear or see this it make sure to double check
- Fit a tracker: These devices can alert you when your car is active and if it’s travelling in a new area.



## **Relay Theft**

Vehicles fitted with a smart or passive key are susceptible to relay theft. This key system allows you to gain entry and start your vehicle without the need to interact with your vehicle's key. Criminals use specialist equipment that has the ability to grab the signal from the car to the smart key so that it appears to the car that the key is present. Your vehicle is most vulnerable overnight, particularly if parked on your driveway or directly outside your home.

### **How to prevent this:**

- When not in use – either at home or when out and about - store your keys (including spare keys!) in a security pouch. Security pouches are sometimes termed Faraday bags or signal blockers/shields and there are many security rated versions on the market (PSNI recommend Secured by Design accredited pouches/containers). These will prevent the signal from your vehicle being captured using electronic devices
- Keep updated with latest software: Many manufacturers are now updating their in-car security systems to stay ahead of these attacks

## **Key Programming**

Key programming is being used by criminals to assign a new key to vehicles, by plugging a device into the On Board Diagnostic port (OBD) of the vehicle. The OBD port will in most cases be located in the driver's foot well. Criminals will gain entry into your vehicle then plug into this port and programme a blank key to the vehicle.

- Fit an OBD lock guard professionally fitted
- Electronic OBD security is available – seek the main dealer's advice



**Catalytic Converter theft** - The precious metals used in catalytic converters such as rhodium, platinum and palladium has led to an increase in their theft. Cars that are most often targeted are hybrid vehicles as these vehicles have two power sources (electric and petrol or diesel) so the catalytic converter is used less frequently - the metals are less likely to corrode, meaning they are worth more and therefore more attractive to thieves. Vans and SUV's are particularly at risk, as the ride height makes access to the exhaust system beneath them easier.

To keep your vehicle safe, ask your manufacture or dealer if they can give you any advice on locks or guards to protect the catalytic converters under the vehicle. Any products will need to be approved by the vehicle manufacturer for use on your vehicle model.

**Secured by Design**



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