



## Carjacking tips: Minimizing the risks

**Carjacking** is the term for the crime of a car being taken from a person either by force or threat of force. Minneapolis has approximately two auto-mobiles taken by force from the driver each week (based on 2006-2008 statistics.). Some of these vehicles are taken by overpowering the driver, others are taken with the use of weapons. The vehicles are taken for a variety of reasons — for parts or transportation.



**What you can do to protect yourself from becoming a victim includes the following:**

### ***AVOIDANCE***

**You will be safer if you avoid certain situations.**

- Don't drive without first locking your doors and closing your windows.
- Avoid parking in secluded, poorly lit areas, especially at night.
- Don't walk to your car alone. Remember that both men and women are vulnerable to carjacking. Walk in pairs whenever possible.
- Carry a small flashlight or a keychain light.
- Walk with a purpose. Don't walk aimlessly toward your car.
- Have your keys out, ready to unlock and enter the car without delay in order to avoid standing by your locked car looking for your keys.
- Drive to a safe public place and call the police if you think someone is following you.
- Don't get out of your car if you see suspicious people. If you are in doubt, or are approached, drive away.
- To avoid other thefts that sometimes follow carjackings, separate your car keys from your house and office keys.
- Don't pick up hitchhikers.
- Always keep valuables out of view if you must travel with them in the car.

### ***AWARENESS***

**Be aware of your surroundings.**

- Plan ahead and know your route. Use well-lit and well-traveled roads.
- Have an alternate route in mind in case of problems. Let someone know the route you will take and when you plan to arrive.
- Don't travel alone if at all possible.
- Avoid shortcuts that take you through unfamiliar or unsafe areas.
- Be aware of people who may be following you to your car.
- Recognize that carjacking can occur anytime, anywhere.
- Be aware that any car may be the target of carjackers, not just expensive, high-profile cars.

## ***ALERTNESS***

### **Be alert to potential dangers.**

- Be alert to any activity near your car.
- Be alert to people loitering in parking area.
- Be suspicious of people approaching you and your car.
- If you think someone has tampered with your car, don't enter.
- Check door handles, locks, and back seat before entering.
- When stopped in traffic, leave enough distance between your car and the one in front of you, so you can pull away quickly if necessary.

## ***ACTION***

### **Certain actions will help keep you safe if you are a victim.**

- If someone demands your car keys, don't resist. Nothing is more valuable than your life.
- If someone asks for assistance, do not get out of your car. Offer to call 911 and drive to a safe location to make the call.
- If in serious danger, you may consider running a stop sign or red light if, in your judgment, you will not endanger others.
- Make mental notes of physical descriptions and direction of escape. Write it down if you have a pen and notebook available.
- If house keys are taken, change your locks immediately. If a garage door opener is in the car, change the security setting immediately. If possible, do not leave your garage door opener in your car.
- Consider carrying a pocket alarm. The alarm emits a high-pitched, very loud, siren-like sound that often sends attackers running. If you're in danger, consider honking the horn or using the panic button on your key fob to attract attention.
- Consider getting an alarm system for your car.
- If you are a victim, call 911 immediately, and make a report.

Remember, if you become a victim of carjacking:

- Comply with the demands of the carjackers; your life is worth more than the car.
- Try to get away rather than get in the car. Isolation with suspect(s) can be dangerous.

Contact your crime prevention specialist for additional prevention information. Call 311 (or 612-673-3000) or see [www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/police/outreach/docs/safe-staff-map.pdf](http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/police/outreach/docs/safe-staff-map.pdf) to locate your neighborhood crime prevention specialist.

For further crime prevention resources, please visit [www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/police/crime-prevention/](http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/police/crime-prevention/).



**English:** Attention. If you want help translating this information, call 612-673-3737

**Spanish:** Atención. Si desea recibir asistencia gratuita para traducir esta información, llame 612-673-2700

**Somali:** Ogow. Haddii aad dooneyso in lagaa kaalmeeyo tarjamadda macluumaadkani oo lacag la' aan wac 612-673-3500

**Hmong:** Ceeb toom. Yog koj xav tau kev pab txhais cov xov no rau koj dawb, hu 612-673-2800

**Sign Language:** TTY 612-673-2626

If you need this material in an alternative format, please contact the Minneapolis Police Department at 612-673-2912.