



Car Break Prevention Tips

Car breaks are an internationally common crime, and Hartford is not immune to them. The good news is that there are things you can do to protect yourself from having your car broken into and damaged, and your things stolen:

- Leave at home items attractive to thieves, or,
- **Put your junk in the trunk!** And put items attractive to thieves in your trunk *before* you arrive at your destination.
 - Putting the items in your trunk while at your parking spot can tip off a thief that you have good stuff to steal.
 - **Never leave anything visible inside your vehicle!** This is the single most important thing you can do to prevent your car window being smashed and your valuables stolen.
 - Thieves take things you might think are *worthless*, smashing your car windows while doing so.
- **Take with you, leave at home or store in your trunk things like:**
 - GPS units (*always wipe off the suction cup ring* on your windshield – that ring is a dead give-away to a thief that a GPS is in the car). **GPS units are the most common items stolen in car breaks.**
 - Handbags, purses, wallets, gym bags, briefcases. These are the second most stolen items.
 - Cell phones,
 - MP3 players,
 - Chargers (even if you hide your electronics, if the thief sees the charger he'll break in on the assumption that the GPS, phone, or MP3 player is hidden under your seat or in your trunk),

- Stereo faceplates, satellite radios,
 - Radar detectors,
 - Loose change. To some, your spare change is a fortune. A thief **will** break your car window to steal your 73 cents,
 - CDs, DVDs,
 - Laptops and cases.
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- Park in a well-lit spot with lots of foot traffic. Avoid parking on isolated side streets.
 - Park in attended lots.
 - Roll up your car windows all the way, and lock your doors. Engage your car alarm, but DO NOT depend on it to deter a thief much. A car thief can break in and get out of your car in about 30 seconds, too short for the alarm to scare away most of them.

What to do if you see a car break-in *in progress*:

- Call 911 and tell the police.
- When talking to 911, try to give as much as possible of the following:
- **LOCATION:** such as an address or block number, or a specific location in a parking lot.
- **DESCRIPTION OF THE THIEF:** provide as much as you can, such as sex, race, age, height, weight, hair color and length, color and length of facial hair, colors and style of clothing, and identifying marks such as tattoos.
- **DIRECTION:** give the direction of travel if the thief flees. If the thief flees on a bicycle, describe the color and type of bike.
- **DESCRIPTION OF THE VICTIM'S CAR.**

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