

KEYLESS CAR AND VAN THEFT



FIRST PRINCIPLE

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Key Points to Consider

- Always keep entry fobs in a faraday pouch
- If you can, turn off the key
- Park in well-lit, secure locations
- Use a Steering wheel lock

Keyless entry car fobs or cards work by emitting a signal that the vehicle detects when it's a few feet away, allowing you to unlock the doors and start the engine. Thieves can exploit this wireless technology by getting hold of a relay amplifier and transmitter on the black market, then finding a vehicle parked close enough to its owner's house (where the key is).

How Does It Work?

While one criminal stands by the car or van with a transmitter, a second walks around the perimeter of the house with the amplifier, and if the key is close enough it will detect its signal and send it to the transmitter. At this point the transmitter effectively becomes the key, allowing the thieves to gain access to the vehicle and even drive it away. The whole process can take just seconds and be completed in virtual silence.



Security Basics

Always stick to the basics of vehicle security first. Ensure your vehicle is parked in a well-lit or secure area, properly locked and all valuables are removed. Once in your home or office, ensure your keys are as far away from doors and windows as possible, preferably shut inside a drawer.

Signal-blocking pouches

Don't assume that wrapping your key in foil will do a good enough job. It isn't designed for this purpose. As keyless crime has spiked, several anti-theft pouches have hit the market that are designed to block signals emitted by the key. The idea is simple - keep your key inside the *Faraday* pouch when not in use, and special material will prevent a relay amplifier from picking up its unique signal and transmitting it. We'd recommend only buying these from a reputable outlet and looking for reviews and accreditation to ensure it will work.



Switch off the key

The wireless signal from some keyless fobs can be turned off, although the feature isn't always obvious and can require a combination of button presses. Consult the manual or contact the manufacturer to find out if this is possible for the keys to your car.

Physical security measures

As criminals turn to technology, many owners are resorting to low-tech physical security devices like steering wheel locks and drive-ways with locked gates or barriers.



Make life difficult for thieves in this way and even if they can unlock the vehicle, hopefully they won't be able to drive away in it.

Many criminals will also move on to an easier target when faced with extra security that's time consuming and noisy to defeat.

Tracking devices

It's possible to subscribe to a security company called Tracker who can fit a tracking device to your vehicle and use it to trace its location if it's stolen.

<https://www.tracker.co.uk/>

More details can be found on the Secured by design website

<https://www.securedbydesign.com/>

First Principle: Related links

Ask the Police

Official Police Resource. The Ask the Police website provides you with information on a wide range of non-emergency policing matters.

askthe.police.uk

Secured by Design

Official UK Police initiative that combines the principles of 'designing out crime' with physical security.

securedbydesign.com

Sold Secure

Dedicated to reducing the risk of crime by assessment of security products.

soldsecure.com

Crimestoppers

An independent charity that gives people the power to speak up to stop crime 100% anonymously, by phone 0800 555 111 or online.

crimestoppers-uk.org

Victim Support

An independent charity that is dedicated to supporting victims of crime and traumatic incidents within England and Wales.

victimsupport.org.uk



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