



Alresford and District Neighbourhood Watch Association



KEYLESS CAR THEFTS – CRIME PREVENTION

There are a variety of ways in which criminals will try and gain access to a keyless vehicle. As we all know, due to the mess and noise involved with breaking a window, thieves will try the door handles first; especially since some cars remain unlocked if the owner's key fob is nearby.

Unfortunately, more and more criminals are using a receiver to capture the owners signal from the fob and tricking the car's security system into believing it is close to the relevant key fob, thus unlocking the doors.

A similar practice is by jamming the owner's signal, as they leave the car, because they then think it has been securely locked, when in fact it is still open.

Once a thief has access they can then plug a hand held 'key fob' programmer into the car's on-board diagnostics which provides them with control of the car, normally within 20 seconds! Unfortunately these key-fob programmers are freely and legally available on the Internet.

Current advice is to -

- Be aware of potential jammers/thieves by ensuring all windows, sunroof and boot are shut and physically locked, whenever you leave the vehicle.
- Try and park your vehicle in an open, well-lit and secure area. If you have access to a garage then use it, or park within the view of CCTV cameras.
- Either fit, or confirm that an approved alarm or immobiliser is working.
- Use an approved steering wheel lock or gearstick lock. Some vehicles can be fitted with a lockable pedal cage and all of these items are highly visible and good deterrents.
- Consider fitting an on-board diagnostics (OBD) lock and displaying the warning notice in your car.
- Consider fitting a tracker, so that if the car is stolen the police have a greater chance of finding it.
- Combat the use of scanners, for cloning your vehicles key, by purchasing a Faraday Bag or Box to store your keys/fob. This will restrict electronic signals being transmitted to and from your keys.

A number of car owners, especially those with vehicles worth many thousands of pounds, are buying steering wheel locks, as well as a Faraday Bag or Box (*) for their keys. These can be quite easily purchased online, or in store, and it has been found that by making it more difficult for thieves to break into your car, they will probably go elsewhere.

Finally, always remember to never leave items on show in a vehicle. If you do, you will stand a good chance of getting your vehicle broken into!

(*) A **Faraday cage** or **Faraday shield** is an enclosure used to block [electromagnetic fields](#). Faraday cages are named after the English scientist [Michael Faraday](#), who invented them in 1836.