



## New Berlin Police Department

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### Theft from Vehicle Prevention Tips

Theft from vehicle incidents occur at all hours of the day and night. Most of these incidents are crimes of opportunity, and many could have been prevented had simple preventative measures been taken.

Theft from vehicle prevention, like all crime prevention, involves reducing an offender's opportunity to commit the crime. With very little time and effort, you can make a huge difference in your vulnerability to this type of crime. It generally takes a mere few seconds to secure your valuables but it will take only a few seconds more for a thief to enter your vehicle and steal your valuables.

**Lock your vehicle** - Every vehicle has locks, so you should use them! Most of the entries to vehicles in New Berlin involve unlocked vehicles. It is not uncommon for a thief to stroll through a neighborhood and check vehicle doors to see if they are locked. Very seldom will a thief force an entry to a vehicle. If your vehicle is locked, the thief will generally move on.

**Don't leave valuables in your vehicle** - That sounds like common sense but many people do leave items of value in plain view. If you leave valuables in plain sight in your vehicle, your vehicle is automatically a target regardless if it is locked or not. If you must leave valuable items in your car while out and about, place these items out of sight. Use a trunk if you have one as they are a little more difficult to enter and a thief can't see what is inside. However, keep in mind that many trunks can be opened from the passenger compartment of the vehicle.

**Don't leave your key/fob in your vehicle** - Do not leave a spare key in your vehicle under any circumstance or you may be missing a vehicle along with the rest of your valuables.

**Leave no trace** - Don't even leave any indicator that there may be something of value in the vehicle such as docking stations, connector cables, or GPS unit holders. Just leaving an empty holder in your car can end up costing you a broken window because the thief saw this and decided to do some fishing in your car. Very few forced-entry to vehicles are random. They are usually a result of an offender seeing something in plain sight that is valuable or hints of possible hidden valuables.

**Park in a well-lit area** - Well lit parking lots and driveways are a good deterrent. It is inexpensive to install a motion activated or dusk-to-dawn floodlight in a driveway and this will also help protect your home from being targeted. Darkness is a criminal's best friend.

#### Items Commonly Stolen from Vehicles

- Cash, coins, checkbooks, and credit / debit cards
- Wallets and purses, even when hidden under a seat or in a glove compartment
- Smart phones and chargers
- Laptop computers & other electronic equipment

- Portable GPS navigation systems
- Jewelry, keys, mail, tools
- Backpacks, gym bags, briefcases, day-planners
- Firearms
- Anything of obvious value

If you keep any of the above items in your vehicle, you may be next. Don't make your vehicle a big gift-box for a thief. Take precautions to reduce an offender's opportunity from victimizing you!