

This is a community message from Northamptonshire West Police to all NHW received from Bedfordshire Police to help reduce car crime this summer.

Often when we leave our cars we simply press the key fob to automatically lock the door. It's quick and convenient but how often do we make sure the car is secure? If the battery in your key fob is low, you press the wrong button or are simply out of range the locks - and therefore the alarm - may not be set. Lock your car while you are close to it, watch the hazard lights activate and / or listen for that distinct sound of the locks applying. Why not take the time to try the door handle just to make sure and, of course, never leave anything in the car that might tempt a thief.

It will hopefully be a long hot summer and many of us will be packing the car for day trips and extended holidays. Don't be tempted to pack the car the day before, the computer games or DVD player that entertains the kids on the long journey are rich pickings for a thief if left in the car - either prior to leaving, on arrival or even at a stop off en-route.

Motorists are urged not to leave everything of value at home unless you absolutely need it. If your car is broken into it could mean weeks of inconvenience and unwelcome expense. Please remember to:

- Lock doors and ensure that windows and sunroofs are shut.
- Physically check that the doors are locked.
- If you have an alarm, or other security devices, use them.
- Park in a well used location that is well lit during hours of darkness.
- Never be tempted to leave bank cards, sat navs or mobile phones in the car.
- Don't assume that by putting valuables in the boot they will be safe - thieves could be watching.

Thank you for your support.