

## WHEN GETTING OUT OF YOUR VEHICLE

- ◆ Park in a well-lighted area.
- ◆ Park near a main aisle.
- ◆ If possible, park in an outside parking lot with an attendant.
- ◆ If suspect something is wrong, don't stop.
- ◆ Always park where you have a 360 degree view around you.
- ◆ Be aware of your surroundings before you exit your vehicle.
- ◆ Use your auto alarm, if you have one, as a personal safety device.
- ◆ Carry an additional personal safety device or alarm.
- ◆ Roll up your windows before parking your vehicle.
- ◆ Leave your doors locked until you have observed your surroundings and are ready to exit your vehicle.
- ◆ Take your keys with you and have them ready in your hand.
- ◆ Upon exiting, move quickly away from your vehicle.
- ◆ At home, make sure the garage door is down before exiting.
- ◆ Keep your car in working order at all times.

## IF SOMEONE TRIES TO TAKE YOUR CAR

- ◆ Don't panic. Avoid verbal/physical confrontation.
- ◆ If your windows are up, your car is locked, and you can maneuver out of the way, hit your horn and step on the gas.
- ◆ If the perpetrator has a weapon, give up your car immediately. Do not fight or argue. Your life is more important than your car.
- ◆ If your child is in the car and you are forced out and cannot grab the child, yell immediately, "There's a baby in the car!"
- ◆ Do not reach for your purse or anything else in the car. The perpetrator may think you are reaching for a gun and shoot you.
- ◆ Call the police immediately.

## IF YOUR CAR IS TAKEN

- ◆ Remain calm and non-threatening. Take careful note of all physical aspects of the robber and the vehicle, as well as the direction of flight.
- ◆ Report an incident to the police immediately.

*This informational pamphlet is provided by the  
Florida Department of Law Enforcement  
and*

**Orange County Sheriff's Office  
Crime Prevention Unit  
407-254-7380**

**Emergency 9-1-1  
Non-Emergency 407-836-HELP (4357)**



**ORANGE COUNTY  
SHERIFF**

*Sheriff Jerry L. Demings*



## CARJACKING

*Preventing the Crime  
in Florida*

**"Carjacking is the term for a crime where a car is taken from a person whether by force or a threat of force... but if you are aware and alert to the possible dangers, you can greatly reduce your chance of becoming a victim..."**

## CARJACKING

Violence continues to plague our society. The most recent example of senseless violence is carjacking. *Carjacking* is the term for a crime where a car is taken from a person whether by force or threat of force. It is more serious than auto theft because the victim is present during the crime. Carjacking is on the rise throughout the country, but if you are aware and alert to the possible dangers, you can greatly reduce your chance of becoming a victim of this violent crime.

Carjackers usually target unlocked cars with unsuspecting motorists. Citizens must be aware of their surroundings and follow preventive guidelines if they are going to reduce this crime of opportunity.

Everyone is vulnerable to carjacking. Our findings show us that regardless of the time of day, location, or the type of car, everyone is at risk. Carjacking can occur while entering, driving, or exiting your vehicle.

Carjacking occurs for many reasons. The advent of antitheft devices has caused cars to be more difficult to steal; the car is used to flee a crime scene or to commit other crimes; the car has a monetary value to feed a drug habit; gang initiation; or just for kicks.

Remember: If or when an incident occurs, only you can make a decision as to what action to take. Every situation is different and must be evaluated accordingly. Your safety is most important.

## WHEN APPROACHING OR PARKING YOUR CAR

- ◆ Don't dawdle. Move confidently and quickly. Have your keys in your hand.
- ◆ Check to make sure no one is hiding in or under your car. Carry a small flashlight to check dark areas. Be aware of occupied cars nearby and all of your surrounding - 360 degrees.
- ◆ Keep your car locked whether you are in it or not.
- ◆ Drive into your garage front-first so the headlights illuminate the total area. Your own garage is a perfect place to be mugged.
- ◆ Park in a well lighted area at night.
- ◆ Keep your car in working order at all times (tires, fluids, oil, maintenance, etc.)
- ◆ Never let your gas tank get below half full.
- ◆ Safely place children in the car. Lock the door and then secure them in their car seat or safety belt.



## IF CONFRONTED WHILE GETTING INTO YOUR CAR

- ◆ Avoid any verbal/physical confrontations.
- ◆ Cooperate - move quickly away from your car.
- ◆ Walk or run away from your car.
- ◆ Call the police immediately.
- ◆ Give the car description.
- ◆ Give the suspect's description.

## WHEN APPROACHING OR PARKING YOUR CAR

- ◆ Be alert to what is going on around you at all times. Daydreaming or a moment's distraction can put you in jeopardy.
- ◆ Plan your route. Try not to travel alone and avoid trouble spots.
- ◆ Keep your doors locked and your windows closed.
- ◆ Allow room between your car and the car in front of you so you can maneuver quickly if you need to step on the gas and get away. Observe 180 degrees around you.
- ◆ Avoid the curbside lane whenever possible. Operators can break a window, unlock the door and be inside within seconds.
- ◆ Avoid idling your car in neutral. You might have to move quickly.
- ◆ Keep your wallet or purse out of view while you are driving. Never leave it on the seat next to you. Experienced purse grabbers can reach over, grab a purse and be gone within seconds.
- ◆ Keep your car in good repair. Never allow the fuel gauge to fall below halfway. Cars have a way of running out of gas at the worst possible moment.
- ◆ Be careful at stoplights and on the expressway ramps. Carjackers often bump into the back of a car in order to get the driver to pull over.
- ◆ If you are bumped from behind and if it seems suspicious, motion to the driver to follow you. Move at a slow but steady pace to the nearest gas station, police station, or well lit, well populated area. Then immediately call the police.