

IIABA and Trusted Choice Holiday Theft Tips



Your Home:

- Break down all boxes into small pieces and discard them in non-clear trash bags.
- Keep gifts hidden from view at outside windows.
- Lock all doors and windows even when leaving the home for a short period of time.
- Leave spare keys with a neighbor rather than hiding them outside. Burglars are not fooled by your hiding places.
- Indoor and outdoor lights on automatic timer should be used whenever possible.
- When away from your home for an extended period of time, have a neighbor or friend watch your house and pick up your newspapers and mail.
- Beware of strangers at your door: criminals can pose as couriers delivering gifts or be soliciting donations for fake charitable causes. Ask for identification or information about a charity.



Your Car:

- Lock all doors and roll up all windows even when leaving the car for a short period of time.
- Bring gifts into homes with you overnight rather than leaving them in your car.
- When shopping, keep gifts in the trunk or hidden from view in the interior of the car.
- Put all of your packages in the trunk before departing one parking lot and driving to another. Waiting until your next shopping destination allows others to see packages go into the truck of your car and then you departing into the mall or store.
- Avoid parking next to vans and large trucks that block your space from general vision of others.
- Make a mental note or write down exactly where you park your car to avoid wandering around longer than necessary.
- During the day, park away from buildings to reduce the chance of dings from car doors or shopping carts and the likelihood of vandalism.
- At night, avoid secluded areas and park directly under lights whenever possible.
- Look underneath your car before you reach it when returning from shopping; criminals have been known to lie underneath and wait.



While Shopping:

- Use a credit card in order to avoid thefts of large amounts of cash that cannot be replaced
- Shopping with a single credit card is preferable -it is easier to cancel one rather than several if your wallet or purse is stolen.
- Keep purses zipped and in your possession close to your body rather than leaving it in your shopping cart where it is more susceptible to theft.
- Be sure to keep a reference list of phone and account numbers for all your credit cards in a safe place at home.
- Try to carry keys, cash and credit cards separate from each other.
- For freedom of motion and clear visibility, do not overload yourself with packages when leaving a store and returning to your car. You cannot defend yourself with your arms too full of bundles.
- Use ATMs in well-populated, well-lighted locations. Do not throw ATM receipts away at the ATM location.
- Remember there is increased safety in numbers. Avoid walking alone and leave malls and stores well before closing time to assure a more active parking lot.