

THURSDAY, 4 JULY 2024

## RACV URGES CAR SECURITY CHECK FOLLOWING 22 PER CENT INCREASE IN THEFT

RACV is encouraging Victorians to check the security of their motor vehicles following the release of data showing more than 21,400 thefts, or attempted thefts, have been recorded in the 12 months to March 2024.

The number of motor vehicle thefts is up almost 4,000, or 22 per cent, on 2023 figures according to the [latest stats from the Crime Statistics Agency](#).

In addition to motor vehicle thefts, offences of items stolen from inside vehicles has also increased with more than 59,000 thefts, or attempted thefts, in the 12 months to March 2024. This is an increase of almost 10,000 offences, or 18.6 per cent, on the 12 months to March 2023.

Thefts from vehicles commonly occur in residential locations like homes and apartments, particularly in driveways and carports, with items stolen including car registration plates and car accessories.

RACV General Manager Motoring Products Jeff Ames said it's easy for thieves to break into or steal a car when it's in plain sight.

"If the opportunity presents, thieves will break into a car and take possessions that are easily visible from outside the vehicle, often using the opportunity to steal the car itself. That why it's crucial to protect your vehicle, even when it's parked at home," Mr Ames said.

"Unfortunately, just because your car is parked at home in a driveway doesn't mean it's completely safe so don't forgot to lock the doors, wind up windows, and ensure nothing valuable is in plain sight.

"Number plates rank as one of the top items stolen from cars. These plates are then fitted onto stolen vehicles and used to commit crimes including ram raids, fuel theft, and burglaries," he said.

In light of the new data, RACV suggests some simple precautions that can reduce the risk of car theft:

1. **Secure your number plates:** To protect your car from number plate theft, install anti-theft screws (also called safe plate screws, one-way screws or security screws). These screws can't be easily removed and can be fitted at one of [Neighbourhood Watch's Safe Plate events](#) across Victoria.
2. **Remove your valuables:** Leaving valuable items like mobile phones, dashcams and other car accessories in plain sight increases the likelihood of theft.

3. **Lock your car:** Always remember to secure your vehicle and take your keys with you whenever you leave, and don't neglect locking the car's rear doors and windows as these are frequently targeted by thieves for vehicle entry.
4. **Park in a locked garage or behind a locked gate if you can:** This takes away the opportunity for an offender to quickly jump in and steal the car from a driveway or carport. Consider installing sensor lights and security cameras, ensuring garage access points are highly visible, and never let an unfamiliar car follow you into a communal garage.
5. **Check your insurance:** [Car insurance](#) may cover you in the event of theft from your car, so it is important to make sure your insurance is up to date and to check that you're adequately covered by looking through the product disclosure statement.

For more information about further steps you can take to minimise the risk of vehicle theft, visit [racv.com.au](http://racv.com.au) or [nhw.com.au](http://nhw.com.au).

**-ENDS-**

## Further information

Since 1903, [RACV](#) has been one of Australia's most trusted brands and is the largest member organisation in Victoria.

RACV is proud to provide exceptional experiences for our members and customers through a range of products and services across motoring and mobility, home, energy and leisure. These include emergency roadside assistance, motor insurance, home insurance, home trades and an increasing range of options in the cleaner energy space, such as RACV Solar. We have 10 clubs and resorts across Australia and offer a range of domestic and international holiday packages, tours and cruises from our trusted travel partners.

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