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# Tips to Keep Your Vehicle and Goods Secure while Holiday Shopping

**El Paso, Texas** – The El Paso Police Department’s Auto Theft Task Force would like to pass on some holiday tips before you go out shopping during this holiday shopping season. With the holidays looming right around the corner, please be safe and smart and do your part to prevent yourself from becoming a victim of a crime, with these few simple tips.

- 1. Watch where you park:** Find a parking space as close as you can to the store entrance and under a light if it is dark. Make a note of any nearby signs, poles, or other landmarks to make it easier to find your way back. Try to avoid parking next to large vans or SUV’s that give a thief privacy.
- 2. Hide the goods:** Do not leave packages, phones, music players, or other valuables on the seats, floor, dash, or anywhere in sight. Lock items in the trunk or otherwise stash them out of sight. Even a cell phone cord in plain sight is an invitation for trouble.
- 3. Lock it up:** It may sound obvious, but law enforcement professionals say that many thefts are the result of unlocked cars. Double check to make sure you close the windows and lock all the doors before leaving your vehicle. In addition, do not forget to close the sunroof.
- 4. Take your keys:** It may seem a bit obvious, but nearly half of all stolen vehicles are a result of the owner leaving the keys within the vehicle at the time of theft. Please note that it is against the law to leave the keys in an unattended vehicle.
- 5. Keep moving:** If you come out of the store to drop off a load of packages in your vehicle, move your vehicle to another parking space, before going back for more shopping, or better yet take your packages home. Criminals may be watching you and know you will not be back to your vehicle for a while.
- 6. Stay focused:** Pay attention to your surroundings while walking to and from your car. Walk with a purpose and stay off the phone. Have your keys ready as you approach the car and get yourself and your packages inside your vehicle quickly. Once inside your vehicle, lock your doors.

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