



[Safety Centers](#) | [Safety News](#) | [Safety Products](#) | [Safety Articles](#) | [My Safety](#) | [FREE REGISTRATION](#) | [Site Map](#)

- [Parking Lot Security](#)
- [Cameras](#)
- [Car Park Security](#)
- [School Parking Lot Security](#)
- [Security Vehicles](#)
- [UK Building Regulations](#)

## Parking Lot Security

We read of people being held at gunpoint or knifepoint in parking lots, but we never believe we can be the next victim. Follow these parking lot safety tips to avoid being the next headline.

- Most people believe that once they reach their cars they are safe. This is not true, because cars offer places for thieves to hide and obscure vision of other pedestrians.
- When you get to your car, take time to look around and behind you. Avoid tunnel vision and forgetting your surroundings. When thieves see that you have lost track of where you are and seem disoriented they are more likely to attack.
- When walking to and from your car, use your possessions as weapons, and have them ready. Items like keys and purses won't beat guns or knives, but they will fend off weaponless thieves.
- Travel in groups or while other pedestrians are around if possible. If you are alone stay in your car until you see trustworthy people walk by, and walk near them.
- Park as close to your destination as possible and if you are worried about the area stay in lit places and out only during the day time.
- Report suspicious looking and loitering people. Talk to security when they drive by or make a call from inside a building.

Police officers agree that, of all of these tips, being aware of your surroundings is the most important one. Remain calm in any situation, but yell and get the attention of people around you if you feel unsafe. You can never be too cautious.

-- Hadley Quish

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