



Safety in the Parking Lot

Miami University is a relatively safe campus, and with few incidents of crime it is easy to get lulled into a false sense of security and become careless. The truth is, we are **not** immune from any of the crime problems encountered at Universities elsewhere in Ohio, so we should all keep crime prevention in mind as we go about our daily activities.

When parking your car as you arrive at work, think about what it will be like when you come back out at the end of your day. It may still be daylight when you arrive, but if it's going to be dark before you depart, try to park under or near a light, or as close to the building as you can. If possible, as you get out of your car, put the front seats forward. This makes it easier to inspect your car for intruders when returning. Make sure when you leave your car you have concealed everything of value. Although we have few, if any, cars stolen, we do have problems with "smash and grab" thefts from time to time. In most cases, "smash and grab" thieves wander through a parking lot looking for obvious things of value inside cars: a radar detector on the dashboard, a wallet on the console, or a purse on the front seat. They smash the window, grab the valuables and quickly leave the area. Concealing valuables reduces your chances of being a "smash and grab" victim because few thieves will risk breaking a window if they can't see something of obvious value inside. In addition to securing your valuables, make certain you lock your car as you leave it and roll all the windows up firmly. Before thieves break a window, they usually try the doors and check the windows for less obvious ways to break into the car.

If it's dark when you arrive or depart your place of employment, make sure you don't have an armful of cumbersome items; try to place them in bags or back packs, making them easier to carry. Not only is this more convenient, it also keeps your hands free to defend yourself if you should be confronted, and it makes running away easier if someone approaches you unexpectedly. If possible, arrange to walk to and from your car with a colleague, as two people walking together reduce their odds of being attacked by approximately **eighty percent**. If someone can't walk with you, then proceed directly from the building to your car (or vice versa) with your keys ready so you don't have to fumble around in your pocket for them. Remember, if you are ever concerned for your safety in getting to or from your place of employment, feel free to call the police dispatcher at 529-2222 and a police officer will be sent to see you safely on your way.