



Keyless Theft of Vehicles

What is a vicinity key?

A vicinity vehicle key operates using an automatic signal. You only have to be near the vehicle, for it to intelligently detect the key is present. It will unlock and the key (or signal) only has to be present to press a button to turn on the engine.

What is a keyless theft and how does it work?

Keyless car theft is stealing a motor vehicle without taking or getting physical access to the keys. It works by using a signal boosting device which boosts the signal detected from your key, to the vehicle, making the vehicle think the key is present when it is not. This crime can be committed without even entering your property by detecting the signal from outside.

The speed in which these crimes can occur is shocking. You can see it here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8pffcngJJq0>  YouTube

In this case, the keys will have been somewhere near the front door. The device held by offender 1 - scanning the front of the property picks up the signal from the key. This device boosts the signal to offender 2's device (near the car). The car then thinks that this device is the key and unlocks the vehicle. In this case, offender 1 walked off too soon and lost the signal before the engine could start so had to go back. You can see from the lights on the vehicle when the signal is regained and the engine starts; enabling them to drive straight off.

I have a vicinity car key, what can I do?

Our advice;

- Keep car keys in a signal blocking pouch which stops the signal from your key when you are not using it. You can purchase Police approved 'Secured By Design' signal blocking pouches here: http://www.securedbydesign.com/?post_type=product&s=signal+blocker
- We also urge you to keep keys away from the front of your property. Keeping them upstairs and/or hidden away is preferable.

**Please note - if you have to press any buttons on your key to open the vehicle, then it is not a vicinity key and you are not at risk of this type of crime.*