



# Parking Lot Safety Tips



As shoppers flock to malls and shopping centres to find the perfect holiday gift, parking lots quickly fill with vehicles and pedestrians. Parking lots can be a dangerous place for many. Whether as a pedestrian or a driver, parking lots should be treated the same way one would treat a street.



## Tips for Pedestrians

- Stay alert while walking through parking lots. Look and listen attentively. Wear proper footwear during periods of snow, ice, or rain.
- Vehicles have blind spots. Because of this, approaching drivers may not see you, even if you see them.
- Do not walk in the middle of the drive aisle. If a sidewalk or designated pedestrian route is not available, walk on the side of the parking lot or the drive aisle, facing on-coming traffic. Avoid walking in the areas between parked vehicles. Do not step onto roads or from between parked cars without looking first to make sure it is safe
- Be aware of vehicles backing out of parking stalls. Watch for lit brakes lights and reverse lights.
- Make eye contact with persons in driver's seats of parked vehicles about to pull or back out of a parking space to ensure they have seen you.
- Parents and guardians, keep children in sight and close to you. Teach children when exiting the vehicle to stand and stay still next to your vehicle. Teach children that parked vehicles might move - although they might see a vehicle, the driver may not be able to see them. Hold you're your child's hand when walking through parking lots or use child-safety tethers. Secure older children in their seats first before loading bags and parcels into the vehicle.
- Be especially cautious at night, due to low visibility and a greater likelihood of criminal activity. Take note of emergency call stations. Try to stay within sight of surveillance cameras. Alert mall security or the police if suspicious persons are present in the area.

## Preventing Auto Crime

- Avoid dark and secluded parking spots. Park in well-lit, busy places where others passing by can provide natural surveillance and serve as a deterrent.
- Secure your vehicle. Make sure all the doors are locked and windows are rolled completely up. Never your vehicle is running when unattended.
- Remove valuables from your vehicle. Place loose change, electronics, shopping bags, packages or holiday gifts, in the trunk or out of sight. To prevent identity theft, ensure items containing personal information are out of sight. Store garage door openers in a glove box or concealed place.
- Use anti-theft devices, such as steering wheel locks, vehicle alarms or electronic immobilizers.

## Tips for Drivers

- Communicate with other drivers and pedestrians by signalling.
- Be patient. Avoid hovering immediately behind a vehicle you think is going to back up so you can take their space. This could block traffic and create tension with other drivers.
- Be alert. Expect the unexpected. Always yield to pedestrians. Always watch for pedestrians, as they may not be paying attention and walk out into the road in front of you. Check your mirrors often.
- Obey the posted speed limits for the parking lot. Drive even slower in the event of rain, snow, or ice or at any time when visibility is impaired. Be mindful of the arrows on the pavement that indicate the designated direction for each lane.
- If possible, back into parking spaces to make it easier to pull out when departing, reducing the possibility of hitting pedestrians or other vehicles. If backing out of a parking stall, take an extra moment to look around before shifting into reverse to ensure no vehicles or pedestrians are in the vicinity – do not rely solely on back-up cameras. Be careful opening your door as you exit your car to avoid denting the side of the car next to you.
- Watch for pedestrians and make eye contact with them when approaching intersections, crosswalks and when making left or right turns. Be aware that older pedestrians may take longer to cross the road. Be patient.
- Be aware of vehicles stopped in the lane next to you as they may be stopped for pedestrians crossing the road.
- Turn on your headlights and tail-lights, even during the day. Having a vehicle's lights on makes it easier for other cars and pedestrians to see you.