

May 2013



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Ok guys and gals, I have something I need to get off my chest. I hate thieves. I hate those people who think they can just waltz in and take something that doesn't belong to them. We work hard for what we have, and when we can afford something beyond the necessities, I think we should be able to splurge a little and buy it. For people like us, one of those necessities is tools.

Let's back up for a second, though and I'll tell you where this is stemming from. I have a good friend who had his garage broken into last month. The details are somewhat fuzzy since there was no kicked in door or window, but the result was 25 years of tool collection are down the road somewhere. The only positive side to this is that he gets to go tool shopping. A bonus for us is that we get to take some space to think about how secure our own toys are, and some things we can do to ensure they stay that way.

First, I think I need to qualify myself and give everyone a little background on my former career. Before "slinging parts for Harry" I worked in the security industry, focusing on property loss prevention which spanned the range from large retail businesses and convention centers to small business and higher end homes. What I'm going to focus on here isn't high dollar security camera systems or high dollar alarm systems, though both do have their places and are nice additions if you can afford them. I'm going to show everyone some basic tips and tricks that can help deter someone and move them to make an easy score somewhere else.

Let's be honest, a little motivation and determination will overcome just about any obstacle. Johnny Crackhead and his buddy Billy Methmouth are the punks we're trying to stop, not the crew from Gone in 60 Seconds. The whole idea of security is to unbalance the difference between risk and reward. The more exposure a thief has, the harder it is to gain access, and the difficulty to get away easily will weigh on his



Look at that cover, perfect for discreet break-in access! This is how my last house looked when I bought it.

mind as much as the score itself. Tip the scales in your favor enough, and he will walk away looking for the easier score. The place to start is by putting yourself in their shoes, and doing an exterior survey of your property, both the house and your garage.

Step one: Start half a block away. Though it sounds funny, your (their) target is determined before you're standing at the doorway. How your home is viewed makes

the first impression. Look at the two pictures again to see what I mean. There is a covered front doorway hiding in there, 5 ground level windows, and 3 garage doors off to the side. Around back there are 2 sliding doors, 3 separate bedroom windows, a tip-out garage window and a service door into the back of the garage. Those are the easy entry points to a home, they need to be locked, but just as important is that they need to be visible. If there's good concealment, you'll provide a cover for someone to take their time to bypass the locks or break a window to gain hidden access. It is hard to hide in the wide open space, and very easy to be seen. Another thing is lighting. Simple house lights that are always on from dusk to dawn can help, and adding landscape lighting can take away from shadowed areas, but you must remember that anything under 8' off the ground can easily be broken. A street light, either from the city or an owner-added one can cast a broad glow covering a large area. Motion sensing lights are also handy if they're secure from disabling. At this point, intrusion into the home would guarantee easy garage access so we're going to concentrate on direct garage entry.



Lots of labor and 3 thorny bushes later, there is little room to hide.



Clearing out a window-hiding large bush, adding low ground cover, plus defining the door and window will make anyone easily stand out in the setting. The outdoor light was there but changed to a dual light motion version, it will flood the area long before they can approach.

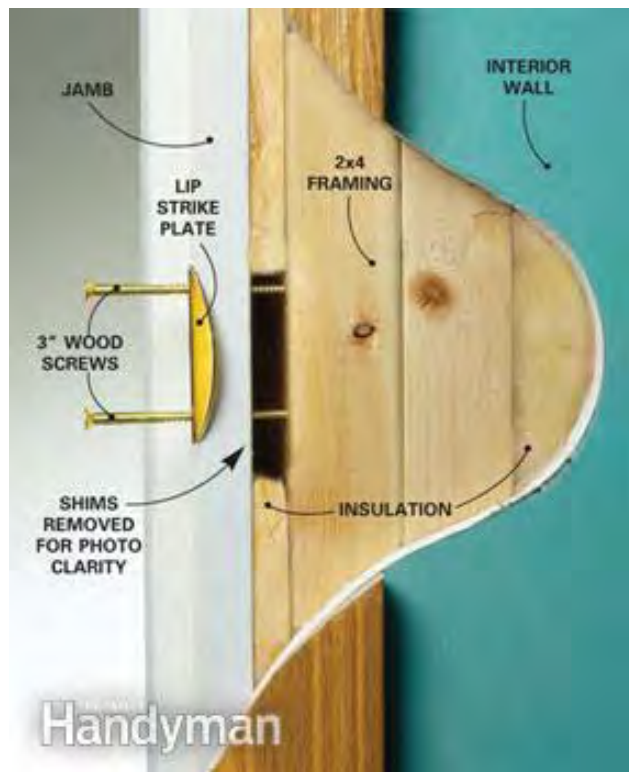
Next up: your garage locks and hardware. If your garage door has an automatic opener, you're relatively safe. Take a look at the door from the inside when closed, though. See that release handle hanging there on the string? A common trick from the outside is to slip a looped wire between the door and frame to hook that string and pull. At that point, the latch will release and you have immediate access to that garage. They can even close the door to sift and sort in private, and work the opener to release themselves when ready. Cut or remove that rope and handle. If you must have that handle available, stash a pre-bent hanger or hook piece inside the garage. Manual door



options include putting a padlock or even a bolt through the track when your away. Don't trust the twist type handle lock that comes with the door either.

Look at the smaller service doors that lead either into the back yard or the house. Deadbolt locks are a must, and if there's any size window within 6

feet they should be key-only actuated on both sides so the lever can't be flipped open with a long stick. The receiving end of the deadbolt should be installed with 3" long screws into the wall studs. Also, make sure the deadbolt itself extends 1" out from the door. Older ones only were 1/2", which combined with the door gap, could give you only 1/4" of actual holding power. A pry bar or strong kick could overcome that lock fairly easily. Same goes for the hinges: use long attaching screws and make sure the pins are on the interior side of the door. Remember, once they're in your garage there is now access to virtually any tool needed to break into your home and a hidden place to work in peace too.



Your garage windows are easy access points. Most are at upper body level and aren't even double-pane. Look at their lock and latching systems, they are quite inefficient. You want to cover or otherwise block out viewing in from the outside. Simple solutions include a piece of cardboard or shades, spray painting the window directly, or applying a window film. The last option is actually doubly effective since while an etched-look window film blocks view while letting light in, it also can

strengthen the glass from simple breakage. Pinning the window shut with nails through the frame and jamb is most effective, though an anchored crossbar would also be effective. Ideally, you plant large thorny bushes below these windows to prevent anyone from wanting to get a close look.

We already touched on landscaping a lighting a little bit, but they are quite important in prevention. Any access area that is hidden from plain

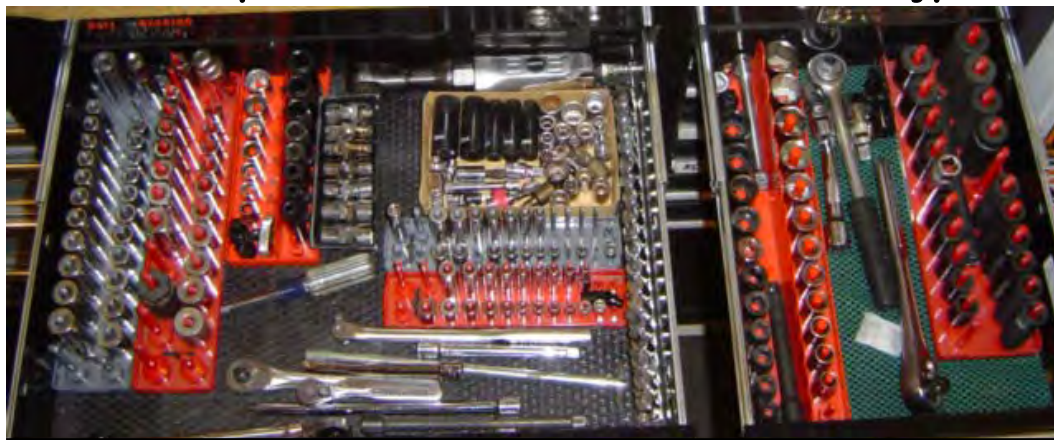
sight, or is shadowed (especially at night) should be addressed.

Thorny or prickly bushes planted under the windows is a good idea. Adding landscape lighting will help take care of shadows, plus draw extra attention to those areas, which means more risk of being seen. Done well,

it can add to the home's overall image without detracting from it.



You can take things way beyond these examples, working your way up to rotating shifts being made by Navy Seals if you want. The main point is that you are actively deterring the event before it happens, because it's a lot easier to keep your stuff than get it back. This is especially true when we're talking about a restored or customized car that has so much of your time and care put into it. One last thing: Regardless of what steps you take, the worst might still happen. If it does, you need to be prepared. Take pictures of your tools, specifically what's in each drawer and the toolbox itself. Same goes for your bench top tools and anything else that's kept on a shelf or things like an air compressor. Make a list of all those tools, including model numbers and serial IDs if possible. You should confirm what type of insurance you have

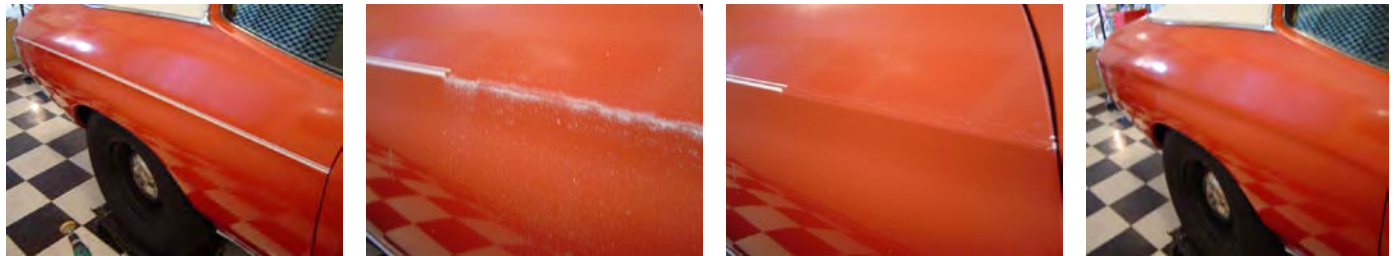


and how it will cover any losses too since (like car insurance) actual value and the replacement value can be quite different. Keep a copy in a safe place, and mail a copy to your agent.

Shoot each drawer and jot down what's in it. For extra credit, add it all up and total the cost to buy again.

Tech session/cool tool: Stripe removal

While not everyone will run into this issue, the time came for me to get rid of those pesky white stripes on the sides of my car. Like almost every job out there, there's a tool for that. 3M makes something called a Stripe Off Wheel, which costs about \$35 and is very simple to use. It comes with a mandrel that chucks into your drill and is essentially a large round rubber eraser. When used, it rubs the stripe material off the body without marring the paint. The following is a sequence of pictures showing each step as the stripes are removed.



I used a small shop bench brush to sweep away the little leftover bits, then used some mineral spirits for final wipe and clean up of the adhesive residue.

Total time for both sides of the car was under 2 hours, including pictures.



After a final buffing, a new SS hood getting prepped, and plans for a black top underway, it should look quite different.

Have a cool tech tip, tool, or project you want to share with everyone? Take some pictures, jot down what you did and let me know. Don't worry about perfect pictures, grammar, or spelling-it's the content that counts.

1-Name/spouse (since the spouses are also members)

Dan Williams/Cathy Laleman

2-What was/were the cars you owned when the club started?

1965 Malibu SS Convertible

3-Do you still have it/them now? Yes

4-Have you had any other cool cars since then?

I have a 71 Malibu Convertible that needs a lot of work, but hopefully it will be soon.

Also have an 87 Corvette, but it will find a new home.

5-Have you held any positions within the club?

No, I live so far away that I am lucky to make 2 meetings a year.

6-What's your best memory of the club?

Bowtie Brunches are always a good time, some of the fall cruises, Derek's last fall was a hoot!

7-What have you gained from being a part of this club?

A LOT of Great Friends!

8-What's your current ride specs? Future plans for it? Awards, features, etc? It's

pretty much bone stock, but a different color. 283 P/G I have refreshed pretty much everything once. I would like to paint it in a few more years. It has been featured in Chevelle World and won Convertible of the year at the 2011 NOCC (Cleveland Ohio) show.

9-Where are you from, what's your occupation? I live in Forest City, IA, about 150 miles from most meetings. I was a salesman for a NAPA store a long time ago, college baseball coach for 17 years and "retired" about 7 years ago. Built my shop after that and spend a lot of time out there fiddling around with stuff.

10-Anything you want to include? We have been doing ACES events for the last 10 years all over the country. Been to Nashville 6 times, Kansas City 8, Cleveland 3, and made the Niagra Falls Can-Am show last year. Even with Aces done, we plan on going to Cleveland



and Kansas City again this year. I have met a ton of great people, I also am a member of the Tri-State and Can-Am Chevelle clubs.