



*'She'll be right. Modern vehicles are fitted with immobilisers. Nobody will take it.'*

I don't know about you, but the only thing we have had stolen from our campsite is an icebox. How un-Australian! We generally leave everything behind when we take off and explore. Chairs, BBQ, gas bottle, and other bits and pieces. Then there's the car in all its glory with a GPS, car fridge, and other camping goodies on full display. It may be locked... but did we take the keys with us?

Here are a few things to consider for security's sake when you're out camping:

## Is Your Vehicle Really Secure?

Apparently, new age thieves don't like breaking glass or hot wiring ignitions (what has become of them?).

Now, they like picking the low-hanging fruit: cars with keys in the ignition. Or, they'll break into your house, tent, or caravan first; it's easier to do than most cars, and they look for the keys neatly hanging on that hook by the door.

Some look for unattended cars at shops, parked cars waiting for their owners at car washes or in workshop yards, or when the owner has 'just popped in' to grab something. They swoop in, and they're done in a flash.



*Leaving your keys in the ignition is risky and is illegal in some states of Australia. Image CnL Locksmiths*

Here's a fact for you: in some Australian states, it is illegal to leave your car unlocked, the window open, or the keys in the ignition if you're more than a certain distance away - even three metres!



## Securing the Campsite

When we go camping, we're not going to stop leaving gear behind. It's too inconvenient for the perceived risk. However, we have started to take precautions. One of the reasons is that our insurance provider requires us to. They're not going to pay out a claim if we've breached the policy.



*If you're exploring away from your campsite, ensure that your gear is secure. Image: Coleman Australia*

We put a few lengths of chain around our solar panels and Weber, and connect them to our caravan's drawbar. Generally, if we have a campsite to ourselves, we'll throw the good chairs and icebox into the 4WD or caravan, but if other campers are around we'll check to see if they're sticking around and ask them to keep an eye on our things. Of course, we'll do the same in return if they go off to explore.

### Handy Tips for Securing Your Campsite:

#### **1. Don't Have Your Home Address or Car Rego on Your Key Ring or Caravan**

Use your phone number instead. If you put your rego number on your key ring, a would-be 'crim' knows exactly what car to pinch. Your phone number is a much safer option, and far more practical for the swift return of your keys.



*Keep your car rego off your key ring; use your phone number instead. Photo: Coleman Australia*

## **2. Big Locks Act as a Deterrent**

An amateur thief wants to be in and out as quickly as possible and often don't carry things like angle grinders (can you imagine?) or bolt cutters.

## **3. Get to Know Your Fellow Campers**

If you get to know your fellow campers, you can see if they'll keep an eye over your camp and return the favour. Still be wary of blindly trusting strangers though, and take the necessary precautions to lock up and secure your gear.



*Be friendly towards other campers, and hopefully you can keep an eye out for each other.*

*Photo: Coleman Australia*

## **4. Check Your Insurance Policy**

Before you head off, double-check with your insurance provider to see what it does and does not cover so you know what to be particularly cautious with.

## **5. Keep Valuables Out of Sight**

Don't leave phones, tablets, computers, or cameras on display. If you have to leave them behind, stash them under a seat, mattress, or somewhere that a would-be thief is unlikely to look.



*When it comes to securing your gear at home, be careful about what you post online. Photo: BioLite*

## 6. Keep Your Trip off Social Media

Be careful with what you post on social media.

To would-be crims, 'We're off to Darwin for a week!' basically says 'Our home will be empty, go rob us'.

The casual 'she'll be right' attitude is what Australia is so well known for. However, the unpatriotic, thieving individuals set out to exploit this attitude. Be cautious. Secure your gear.

**Ben and Lauren also discuss the tips and tricks for campsite safety and security on the Snowys Camping Show:**

**Have you ever had anything stolen while camping? What are your tips for improving campsite security?**