

Easter holiday: keeping your eye on the important things

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Most South Africans are looking forward to a well deserved break this Easter holidays. It allows for quality time with the people who matter most, family. Whether traveling or staying home, families are generally more relaxed during this time and might not be as aware of their surroundings as they would be during their day to day routines. A car door might not be locked or a safety belt could be left unsecured. This is however, the time where we should be more committed to safety due to heightened criminal activities and an influx of traffic on our national roads.

“In general we all have an idea of what we should do to protect our families against harm but spending five minutes on refreshing this knowledge could be of great value when we find ourselves in an unfortunate situation”, says Andre Ittmann, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Cartrack. “Quick thinking and following basic rules of safety could help South Africans to be safer all round.”

While no one situation is the same, Cartrack shares some basic tips and things to consider when traveling this holiday, whether long distance or around the area where you stay.

Whilst on the road – guarding against possible hijackings

1. Have your key ready but not visible. Unlock your car when you're close by. Avoid talking on your cell phone while you walk to your car
2. Make sure that your car has, in fact, been securely locked after you have pushed respective locking devices
3. Check the back seat and under seats before getting into your car
4. A well-maintained car is less likely to break down and leave you vulnerable – make sure you have had your car serviced before you depart to your desired faraway location
5. Plan your route as well as share this with a friend back home. Be sure to let them know when you have arrived at your destination
6. Always check the rear view mirror to see if you are being followed
7. Avoid driving with your windows open and keep the doors locked. Put all valuables out of sight
8. Avoid distractions while driving such as using a cellphone.
9. If you suspect you are being followed, drive to your nearest police station or a busy public area
10. When approaching a red traffic light, slow down so that you only reach it when it turns green
11. When stopping behind another vehicle, leave half a vehicle length in front so you can make an emergency escape if necessary

Apart from being on the look out for criminal activities when traveling, it is also important to ensure that your family members and children are protected inside your vehicle.

Safety inside your car

1. Keep your baby in a rear-facing car seat for as long as possible – until at least two years old as muscles in a baby's body aren't developed enough to withstand the impact of a collision
2. When your children outgrow a rear-facing seat around age two years, move them to a forward-facing car seat
3. Your car seat has an expiration date – usually around six years. Find the label and double check to make sure it's still safe for use. If you are still not sure, visit wheelwell.co.za for more safety tips re car seat safety
4. Toys can injure your child in a crash, so be extra careful to choose ones that are soft and will have minimal impact

upon a possible collision

5. Make sure everyone has their seat belts secured before you drive off
6. Given the above point, make sure the safety belts are in good working order before you drive away
7. Do not leave your child alone in the car – South African climates mean heat, pretty much all year round – apart from a climactic perspective, it simply isn't safe to leave your child unattended in a car
8. Be sure to protect your children by placing sun visors on back seat windows
9. The centre seats are the safest – so place all older children on these

“Always be observant and start integrating the above mentioned tips into your daily life. Paying more attention to your surroundings and by taking additional precautions when traveling with your family could potentially be lifesaving,” concludes Ittmann.

About Cartrack

Cartrack, a company listed on the JSE, is a leading global provider of Fleet Management, Stolen Vehicle Recovery and Insurance Telematics, with over 600 000 clients worldwide. The group's activities are focused on the design, development and installation of telematics technology; data collection and analysis and the delivery of fleet and mobile asset management solutions delivered as Software-as-a-service ('Saas') and the tracking and recovery of vehicles. The group operates in various countries across a number of continents.

Cartrack's systems are built on the most advanced technologies available and are coupled with a devotion to client service delivery. Cartrack technology is widely accepted by motor manufacturers and insurers, hardware and installations being of the highest standard.

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