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Car Theft Soars in 10 UK Hotspots; London Tops the List for Stolen Vehicles

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Drivers are being warned to tighten security as new figures expose the U.K.'s worst regions for vehicle theft in 2024.

Motorists across the U.K. are urged to be extra cautious after fresh data reveals where cars are most likely to be stolen. Topping the list is London, where over 34,000 vehicles were reported stolen last year. That's one car taken for every 88 registered in the Greater London area.

The City of London didn't fare much better, with one in every 91 vehicles stolen. According to research by financial and insurance firm GoComparee, these two areas now hold the

highest rates of car theft in the country. The company used police data, alongside figures from the Home Office, Department for Transport (DfT), and the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA), to uncover the regions worst affected by this type of crime.

The analysis combined theft reports with the number of registered vehicles in each area to calculate the likelihood of drivers becoming victims. The findings suggest car crime is not only common in the capital but also growing across several other regions.

Theft Hotspots

The West Midlands came in as the third worst spot, with one theft for every 110 vehicles. South Yorkshire followed closely behind, where more than 4,600 vehicles were stolen, equal to one in every 167. Essex was next, with nearly 5,700 cars reported stolen, or one in 177. West Yorkshire, Bedfordshire, Nottinghamshire, Durham, and Leicestershire also made the top ten, all reporting higher theft rates than the national average.

Across the U.K., around 133,000 vehicles were stolen in 2024. That's one theft for every 287 registered cars. While the national picture is worrying, the numbers are clearly worse in certain regions, especially busy urban areas where cars are often parked on the street.

Meanwhile, Suffolk appears to be the safest place to own a car. Just 321 vehicles were stolen in the county last year, which means only one theft per 1,752 vehicles. Wales also saw lower theft rates, with Dyfed-Powys recording one per 1,666 and North Wales one per 1,094. Other safer spots included Cumbria, Norfolk, Devon, and Cornwall.

Steve Ramsey, motoring editor at *GoCompare,* urged drivers not to panic but to be proactive. "If you live in one of the areas with higher theft rates, it's a good idea to take some simple steps. Use a steering lock, install a quality alarm, and try to park somewhere well lit or with surveillance cameras. And don't leave your keys near the front door where criminals can reach them," he advised.

Ramsey also pointed out that insurance prices are often affected by local crime rates. "If you're in a hotspot, you could be paying more for your policy. Plus, making a claim after a theft can push up your premiums even further. It pays to shop around and make sure you're properly covered," he added.

In coming up with the data, analysts also used Home Office crime figures. This included areas like Greater Manchester, Sussex, parts of Wales, and Scotland.

The message is clear: while many areas remain relatively safe, car theft is still a major problem in parts of the U.K. For drivers in the most at-risk locations, taking a few extra steps could save a lot of stress and money in the long run.