Holiday Safety in Parking Lots

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I love the lights, the music, and the chance to get together for a holiday dinner. When your plans take you from store to store or out to a restaurant, a few habits can help protect you and the purchases you've made.

Put purchases away before your next stop

If you're shopping at several stores, move bags to the trunk before you leave the first store's lot. That way you aren't showing anyone at the next stop where the bags are going. If you drive a crossover or SUV, use the cargo cover and check from outside that you can't see the bags through the glass. Take valuables with you when practical, and bring purchases inside when you get home [1–3].

Choose where you park

At a store, restaurant, or holiday event, look for a spot with good lighting and a clear path to the entrance, especially if you'll be returning after dark. Close the windows and lock the doors every time you leave, even for a quick pickup. Keep your phone, wallet, and keys with you [1–3].

Give the walk your attention

Put your phone away while walking through the lot. Watch for drivers backing out and keep your keys handy as you approach your vehicle. If something near your vehicle makes you uneasy, return to the store or restaurant and ask security or staff for assistance [1–3].

Before you walk away

Take a quick look through your windows. Can you see any packages or shopping bags? Are the doors locked? Two quick checks at each stop are easier to remember than a long list of rules.

Sources and further reading

[1] City of Lenexa Police Department. Holiday Shopping Safety Tips

[2] Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office. Smart Holiday Shopping and Parking Lot Safety

[3] Los Angeles Police Department. Holiday Safety Tips