Anti-theft devices

It's Monday morning. You hurry through breakfast and the morning paper. You grab your car keys and hurry out to your car. Only it isn't there. With car thefts increasing all the time, new devices to track down thieves are constantly being developed. There are special locks, alarms, systems that cut off the electricity and tracking devices.

Tracking devices won't prevent your car from being stolen, but they will make it easier for you to find it once it is gone. Tracking devices are small monitors, which become activated when your car is stolen. They then send out a signal to pinpoint where your car is located. The police can then go and get it back for you, though the police emphasize that tracking devices are not police equipment; they are sold by private, profit-making companies.

There are several devices on the market but the two best-selling ones in Great Britain are Tracker and Securicor Trakbak. These devices do not give out any outside warning sign, so it is impossible for the thief to know that he or she is being monitored.

Trakbak starts to send out a signal to the Trakbak centre immediately someone enters the car illegally. The Trakbak centre then alerts the police, who can follow the stolen vehicle and return it to its proper owner.

Tracker is a slightly weaker system, because once your car has been stolen, the device will become activated only after you have phoned in your PIN both to Tracker and the police. So if your car is stolen during the night or while you are on holiday, the chances of finding it quickly are not very good.

Because there are no signs on the car to show the potential thief that the car has been fitted with a tracking device, the thief won't be scared off nor can the system guarantee the condition that you will eventually find your car in. So these devices are not an alternative to good car security, but they will help you get your car back. Whether you decide to spend money on them or not is up to you.

to grab: tarttua
to track down: jäljittää
device: laite
to prevent: estää
to pinpoint: osoittaa sijainti tarkasti
to emphasize: korostaa
illegally: laittomasti
PIN: tunnusluku
potential: mahdollinen
to scare off: pelottaa pois
to guarantee: taata

eventually: ennen pitkää
alternative: vaihtoehto

Lähde: Mary Hatakka & Sirpa Piipponen: Tools and rules, cars