Defending Yourself Against Carjacking

A sad fact of modern life is that carjackings are becoming increasingly common in both large and small cities. While some people think that only expensive cars are carjacked, the facts show that carjackers are also interested in other cars for their parts, and some carjackers simply want any available car. Carjacking is not limited to "certain neighborhoods." It can happen anywhere, at any time.

How They Operate
Carjackers may approach with a weapon while you are stopped at an intersection and take the car by force. Or they may stage a "bump and run," a minor rear-end accident. When you get out to inspect the damage, you are robbed by one accomplice while the other drives off in your car.

Stay Alert
The key to avoiding crime is to be aware of your surroundings. Know the route you must travel and areas where you must stop. You don’t want to get lost in an unfamiliar neighborhood. Be on the lookout for suspicious people near intersections and be prepared to change your route to avoid them if you can do so without getting lost.

To protect yourself:
- Keep your car well maintained and your gas tank full.
- Drive with your windows rolled up and your doors locked.

Being aware and knowing how to respond in a dangerous situation will give you the greatest possible control over your own safety.

Don’t Risk Your Life
All these tips are to help you avoid meeting up with a carjacker. But if an armed person approaches you and demands your car, purse, wallet or other valuables, don’t resist. Better to lose your property than your life. Notice as much as you can about the thief and report the incident to the police immediately.

There is no way to guarantee you won’t be a victim of a crime. But being aware and knowing how to respond in a dangerous situation will give you the greatest possible control over your own safety.