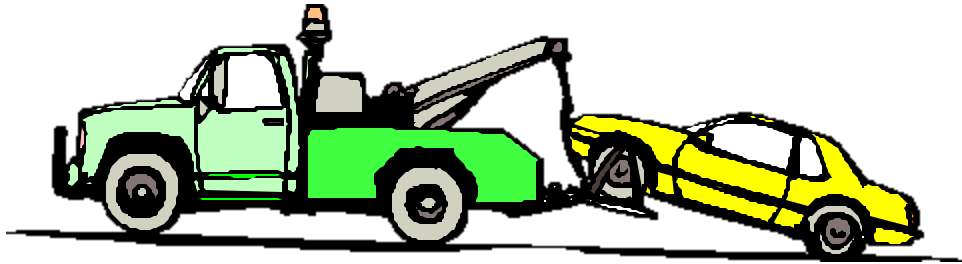


# IIABA and Trusted Choice

## Holiday parking Lot Tips

Malls and shopping centers will be jammed this holiday season. Unpredictable traffic patterns and preoccupied drivers cause thousands of parking lot mishaps that cost consumers millions of dollars each year. Parking lot safety is especially important during the holidays. Consumers should be particularly cautious about where they park because parking lots are also prime territory for thieves, pickpockets, carjackers, and vandals.

Surprisingly, many parking-lot mishaps do not involve two drivers-but rather the result of improper backing into parked vehicles. That increases the likelihood of hit-and-run incidents and the chance that you will be left to pick up the tab. Simple caution is the only real cure to avoid being a victim of parking lot accidents or crime.



### **Parking lot safety tips for holiday shoppers:**

- Watch for cars cutting diagonally across lots; drive slowly and use your turn signal.
- When backing out of a parking spot, be aware of waiting cars, others who are backing out at the same time and motorists who speed through lanes.
- Beware when mailing those holiday greeting cards. Post office parking lots have the highest incidence of accidents due to frequent customer turnover.
- Don't park between spots, especially in busy lots. You may gain only retribution from angry fellow shoppers.
- During the day, park away from buildings to reduce the chance of dings from other car doors or shopping carts and the likelihood of vandalism; but avoid secluded areas, especially at night.
- Park in well-lit areas. If the lot is inadequately lit, complain to management. Retailers and parking-lot owners can be and have been held liable for personal injury in these cases.
- Ask mall security to walk you to your car if you feel you are not safe.
- Always roll up your car windows and lock your car doors.
- Always have your keys ready when approaching your car and check the back seat and under the car before getting in.
- Put all shopping bags in your trunk. Do not keep them in the front or back seat where they are visible to thieves.
- Put all your packages in the trunk before departing one parking lot and driving to another. Waiting until your next shopping destination allows others to see packages go into the trunk of your car and then you departing into the mall or store.
- Review your insurance coverage with your agent. Liability coverage will protect you if you hit another motorist, collision will cover the damage to your car, and comprehensive will insure you for damage by vandals or theft of your vehicle.



Reprinted from the IIABA website at [www.iaa.org/tc/consumer/holidaysafety.com](http://www.iaa.org/tc/consumer/holidaysafety.com)