

AUTOMOTIVE

AUTOGRAPH

'Tune' your mirrors

Properly aligned, your vehicle's side mirrors — when combined with the rearview mirror mounted to the windshield — can provide a broad band of rear visibility that can reduce 'blind' spots and the chance of you sideswiping another car while changing lanes. Unfortunately, some drivers don't have the outside mirrors 'tuned' to deliver maximum visibility.

This is the view from many vehicles' outside mirrors — down the side of the car. The purpose of outside mirrors is to help driver's see what's their car as much as it is to see what's behind.

'Tuning' the mirrors is an inexact science — because driver habits and vehicles are so different — but generally involves moving the mirrors outward enough to eliminate most of the overlap with the rearview mirror.

Once adjusted, the view from the side mirrors reduces blind spots and virtually eliminates right headlight glare from vehicles that are following.

The properly-adjusted mirror is more likely to reveal cars travelling in the 'blind spot.'

The new view

The tuned side mirrors have little overlap with the view supplied by the rearview mirror and offer a view of more road and the traffic that's on it — and around you.

The view from the tuned side mirror.

The view from the typical side mirror.

The view width from the rearview mirror.

Extra view provided by tuned mirror.

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Anti-car theft tips

The Vehicle Information Centre of Canada (VICC) suggests you consider the following to keep your car from being stolen.

□ Don't leave your car unlocked.

□ Don't leave your car (locked or unlocked) with the key in the ignition.

□ When you have the option, park your car in well-lit areas, preferably where there are lots of people.

□ When you park your car at home, ask your neighbors to keep an eye on it, and do the same for them.

□ Mark some of the more expensive parts on your car in an inconspicuous place with an engraving tool, using your car's VIN (Vehicle Identification Number). On metal parts, cover the number with rust-inhibitor. Glass etching is a good deterrent. Thieves don't like cars with parts that can be traced.

□ Try to avoid leaving your keys with others; keys can be stolen or copied. If you must leave a spare key on the outside of your car, be sure that it is well hidden.

□ If your insurance company doesn't have a picture of your car, take one yourself and keep it in a safe place; it will make the job easier for police if your car is stolen.

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