



Preventing shop theft

Key crime prevention tips

- Good customer service is a deterrent.
- Watch for suspicious behaviour.
- Secure cash handling and stock control.
- Secure the store.
- Consider the store layout.

Theft prevention checklist

Good customer service is a deterrent

- Acknowledge customers when they enter the store.
- Ensure empty hangers and excess stock are removed from racks and shelves.
- Check the number of items taken in and out of changing rooms.

Watch for suspicious behaviour

- Keep customers in view.
- Pay attention to customers who appear nervous or distracted.
- Pay attention to customers wearing loose or bulky clothing, especially in hot weather.
- Pay attention to customers who remain in the store for lengthy periods of time.
- Pay attention to customers who loiter outside before shopping.
- Question people in restricted areas, stockrooms or stairways. Check identification of tradespersons.
- Inspect prams, shopping trolleys, boxes and bags, before customers leave the store.
- Keep a record of customers who return items.

Secure cash handling and stock control

- Never leave cash registers unattended.
- Limit the cash kept on site and in the register.
- Ensure customers cannot access behind the counter.
- Do not count cash in front of customers.
- Install security tags on items and barriers at the exits.
- Where possible, lock expensive and portable goods in security cabinets, or keep them away from exits.

Secure the store

- Secure all exits, for example install good quality locks, solid doors, window bars.
- Ensure fire doors or doors to staff areas remain closed and locked.
- Install a monitored alarm.
- Install sensors or alarms to alert staff to a customer entering the store. Electronic doors achieve the same.
- Check all doors are locked at close of business.
- Make sure no one is hiding in the store at closing time.
- Install CCTV with a view of customers entering the store, and customers paying. Use stickers or signs to show that the store has cameras. Ensure staff know how to save and download CCTV footage.
- Show customers they are on camera by having the camera feed visible.
- Install an alarm, which can be discretely activated. Options include a button near the



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cash draw or activation by foot or knee.

Consider the store layout

- Ensure the store is well-lit.
- Ensure staff can see over shelves and clothing racks.
- Install mirrors to help staff to see obscured floor space.
- Keep store windows clear, so staff can see the street.

Other things you can do

- Roster at least two staff members per shift, so the store is never unattended.
- Hire store security and/or loss prevention officers.
- Regularly clean surfaces so to make it easier for police to take fingerprints.
- Use scenarios to train staff on what to do in a robbery (see "Responding to a robbery or armed robbery" for guidance).
- Keep witness description forms near the cash register.
- Mark exit doors with coloured height markers.
- Join your local traders' group.

What to do if there has been a theft in your store

- Tell your supervisor or manager.
- As a witness, report the offence rather than waiting for your manager to report it.
- No issue is too small to report. Report suspicious behaviour to police.
- If required, report the incident to Work Safe Victoria on 13 23 60 or www.worksafe.vic.

gov.au.

Report it

- For emergencies, to report a crime in progress, or for immediate police attendance, call Triple Zero (000).
- For non-emergencies, call the Police Assistance Line on 131 444 or report online at www.police.vic.gov.au/police-assistance-line-and-online-reporting.
- Report anonymously to Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000 or www.crimestoppers.com.au.

**For more information,
visit police.vic.gov.au/your-safety**