

STEER CLEAR OF CYCLE THEFT



Security tips for cyclists

Home Office

KEEP IT SAFE, KEEP IT HIDDEN, KEEP IT LOCKED

LET'S KEEP
CRIME
DOWN

ADVICE ON BICYCLE THEFT PREVENTION

The Government's aim for the next 20 to 30 years is to increase walking and cycling. We want to make this a more convenient, attractive and realistic choice for many more short journeys, especially those to work and school. Because being active is especially important for children, we want to teach them to walk and cycle in safety and confidence.¹

Unfortunately, more bicycles mean more opportunities for theft. The British Crime Survey reports that 439,000 bicycles were stolen in 2005/06. You can help keep your bike secure by following the advice in this leaflet.

¹ For more information, visit the Department for Transport website at www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_about/documents/page/dft_about_031275.hcsp



PROTECT YOUR POSSESSIONS

- When buying a bike, budget for security.
- Take out insurance, either by extending your home contents insurance or through a separate policy. Cycling organisations and bike shops may offer specialist cover. Do this at the time of purchasing the bike, otherwise you may not get around to it.
- Record and register your bike.
 - Register your bicycle model, make and frame number. This assists the police in returning recovered bikes to their rightful owners. Contact your local police station for further advice.
 - Take a clear, colour photograph of your bike and make a written record of its description, including any unique features, so that you can report it accurately if stolen.
- Security mark the bicycle.

A number of proprietary marking and tagging systems are available. To be effective a security marking must:

 - **be clearly visible** – advertise that the bike is security marked or tagged. For example, attaching a clearly visible label is a simple option.
 - **be secure** – for example, by using a tamper-resistant label, etching, etc, or an inaccessible electronic device.
 - **be placed in at least two separate locations**, preferably on or in the frame. At least one of these locations should not be clearly visible.
 - **give clear information** via the visible mark (label, etching, etc) that will quickly allow police to identify the method of security marking or tagging (and where applicable the registration company), and through this identify the owner. Crime Prevention Officers or security marking companies can advise if you are not sure what information to include.



BASICS

AT HOME

More than half of all bicycle thefts take place from an owner's property. Simple crime prevention methods can lessen your chances of having your bicycle stolen.

- **Keep your bike in a secure garage or shed** and keep the door locked.
- **Keep it out of public view.**
- **Secure it to an immovable object** or consider installing a floor or wall-mounted anchor lock for extra security.

OUT AND ABOUT

- **Avoid isolated or dimly lit places.** Leave your bike where a potential thief will have to perform in public!
- **Park your bike safely and considerately.** Make use of cycle parking stands where these are provided. Park your bike where it will not be a hazard, obstruction or inconvenience to other pedestrians – particularly the visually impaired and other disabled people. Allow space for prams and wheelchairs, other cyclists or occupants leaving motor vehicles. Never park in front of a fire exit.
- **If yours is a very expensive bike,** don't lock it in the same place on a regular basis – so it won't be noticed and stolen to order.



SECURITY

- **Always lock your bicycle**, even if you are just leaving it for a couple of minutes.
- **Lock your bike to an immovable object.** Use a proper bike rack/ground anchor or robust street furniture – for example lamp posts or railings (but observe requests not to use certain items of street furniture and be sure not to cause any damage). Remember that thieves can remove drainpipes and lift bikes off signposts. If provision is inadequate, bring this to the attention of the relevant local authority or property owner.
- **Lock your bike through the frame.**
- **Secure removable parts.** Lock both wheels and the frame together. Take with you smaller parts and accessories that can be removed without tools, for example lights, pumps, computers, panniers and quick-release saddles, or fit security fasteners on items such as wheels, headsets and seat posts.
- **Make the lock (and chain, if used) and bike hard to manoeuvre when parked** – to stop thieves smashing the lock open.
 - Keep the lock (and/or chain) away from the ground.
 - Keep the gap between the bike and the lock small.
 - Never leave the lock lying on the pavement – a lock can be sledgehammered easily when it's resting on the ground.
- Locks can also be picked, so **face the lock towards the ground** (but not resting on it) so it can't easily be turned upwards for picking.



It may seem like there are lots of things to think about when locking your bike, but once you get into the habit you will be able to lock your bike within seconds and it will be well worth the trouble!



LOCKS

There are many different products on the market and price is not necessarily a reliable indicator of quality. The most important factor is how long the product can resist attack.



- You should look for products that have been **tested against attack**. Check out www.soldsecure.com for certified locks, or ask your local bike shop for a recommendation. Check the packaging for more information.
- To guard against the **opportunist** thief you need a product that has resisted attack for **one minute**.
- To guard against the **determined** thief you need a product that has resisted attack for **three minutes**.
- To guard against the **dedicated** thief you need a product that has resisted attack for **five minutes**.



Invest in a quality lock. Hardened steel D-shaped locks are recommended as the minimum standard. It is worth spending proportionately more on a lock for a more expensive bike.



HELP US TO HELP YOU

Communication is essential if we are to tackle bike crime effectively.

- **Inform the police** if you have your bike stolen. You can report the theft online (www.online.police.uk), by phone or in person at your local police station. Ask for your CAD (Computer Aided Despatch) or CRIS (Crime Reference Information System) number. This will help you trace the progress of your case and may be needed for your insurance claim.
- **Find out about and take part in** local cycling initiatives to raise awareness about cycle security.
- **Join** one of the many cycling organisations to keep up to date with what is going on locally and nationally.
- **Contact** your local crime prevention officer, local authority, employer or the land owner about the installation of cycle parking where secure anchorages are insufficient or non-existent.
- **Don't help to create a market** in which thieves can operate. When buying a second-hand bike, make sure the seller owns it. When buying a new bike, purchase from a recognised dealer.



Image courtesy of the Department for Transport.

IF YOU THINK YOU ARE BEING OFFERED A STOLEN BIKE, RING CRIMESTOPPERS ON 0800 555 111. FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT www.crimestoppers-uk.org



CONTACTS

More information can be found at:

CYCLING ENGLAND

www.cyclingengland.co.uk

www.bikeforall.com

THE CYCLISTS' TOURING CLUB

www.ctc.org.uk

SUSTRANS

www.sustrans.org.uk

LONDON CYCLING CAMPAIGN

www.lcc.org.uk/index.asp

TRANSPORT FOR LONDON

www.tfl.gov.uk/cycles/safety-security/avoiding-theft.shtml

DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT

www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_about/documents/page/dft_about_031275.hcsp

Further copies of this leaflet can be ordered from Prolog on 0870 241 4680.

An electronic version can be found at www.crimereduction.gov.uk

If you have any questions regarding the content of this leaflet, please contact public.enquiries@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

DON'T LEAVE YOUR BIKE UNLOCKED

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 **London
Cycling
Campaign**
www.lcc.org.uk 020 7234 9310

