

Keeping People Safe



# Preventing retail burglary

**Crime Prevention  
advice to help protect  
your retail premises**

# Preventing Retail Burglary

Retail Burglary is the breaking and entering of business premises with the intent of stealing items. It often results in costly damage to the building and loss of valuable stock, both of which can negatively affect the income from your business.

**Retail Burglaries usually occur at night outside regular business hours.** In most cases burglars enter through doors or windows and leave before police or security are able to respond. Although less common 'ram raids' and 'smash and grabs' involve ramming a car or other objects into a retail building, attempting to grab as many items as possible and then making a quick escape.

In general, burglars are moved by financial gain regardless of whether they are professionals or opportunists, **most retail burglars select stores located in isolated areas or those known to have poor security features, such as low lighting, insufficient locks, no window bars or lack of formal security systems.**

Burglars tend to choose targets based on convenience or the attraction of high value goods located in the store. **They are particularly interested in expensive items that are easily portable, such as electronics, alcohol, cigarettes, designer clothing or recorded music / DVDs.**

Burglaries are not chance occurrences with both business size and the surrounding area playing some role in the likelihood of being

burgled. **Stores that have been burgled once are at increased risk for repeat victimisation.**

Your local **Crime Prevention Officer** will be able to help develop your awareness and knowledge about suitable crime prevention measures for your shop.

## **SMALL BUSINESS SECURITY TIPS:**

### **Burglary Prevention**

- **Light all exterior points of entry** with permanent fixtures that are difficult to reach or tamper with.
- **Light the exterior of your business** enough so that someone outside the building could see someone inside.
- **Install a fence or hedge**, it's your first line of defence. You should be able to see through the fence. Hedges should be wide, rather than high, and of a prickly, thorny variety.
- **Install window locks** designed and positioned so they cannot be reached and unlocked after breaking the glass.
- **Install safety glass** or reinforce windows and doors with grills or bars.
- **Install motion detectors** to sense movement inside the building.
- **Install entry protection alarms** to detect the breaking of windows and the opening of doors.
- **Relocate valuable stock** away from doors or windows.

- **Install a deadbolt lock** in each exterior door.
- **Train your staff**, teach them about the burglary prevention measures you have taken and the correct use of any equipment you have installed.
- **Explain to staff the importance of keeping a watchful eye** for suspicious people/vehicles to prevent people 'casing your premises'.
- **Leave the till open**, by leaving the till visible, open and clearly empty, any burglars seeking cash are likely to lose interest.
- **Reduce stock**, the less you have, the less that can be taken. Coordinate deliveries with your suppliers to introduce 'just in time' deliveries.

## Physical Protection

### Strengthen Potential Entrances

Use high quality door frames and doors, steel reinforcing with anti thrust bolts on vulnerable doors, and bars on vulnerable windows. Glass panels in doors are particularly vulnerable to attack and ideally should be avoided or boarded up. Ask for materials that comply at least to BS8220 for the construction industry, as a minimum standard of strength. The locks on doors should be at least the quality of a five lever mortice lock conforming to BS3621.

## **Grills and Shutters**

This can be an excellent way of deterring burglars, but externally fitted varieties will need planning permission. External Shutters are strongly resisted by some planning authorities as they sometimes create a hostile environment reducing the number of passers by at night, which may in turn increase the level of crime.

## **Fit Grills Inside**

You can protect high value goods within the shop floor area by securing high risk display cabinets, such as for tobacco displays, with protective grills and shutters.

## **Glass Film**

Applying a plastic film to the rear of a window is a good deterrent but filmed glass windows are less clear than non filmed windows. Mirror finished film on rear windows will both increase the strength of the glass and fully restrict a burglar's view into rear storage areas.

## **Laminated Glass**

Is made by bonding a layer of tough plastic between sheets of glass. This will hold the window together even after the glass has broken. To be effective, you must ensure that the window frames and fixings are equally strong.

## **Safes**

A good quality safe will protect cash and valuable items overnight but you should take the added precaution of bolting it in place and securing it discreetly. Your insurers will be able to help you choose a suitable safe and suggest minimum standards of specification.

## Secure Cages

Secure cages in the stock room can provide additional security for high value stock.

## Vehicle Traps

Fixing bollards around your premises will protect against ram raiders, but you will need to consult your planning authority and your landlord. Some designs of bollards can be removed during trading hours. Large concrete planters can be used as an alternative.

For more information call the Police and ask to speak to your local Crime Prevention Officer

**CALL THE  
POLICE**

**101**

**IN AN EMERGENCY  
ALWAYS CALL 999**



Call anonymously with information about crime