

Norfolk & Suffolk Crime Prevention

Guidance Note

Christmas Security



Christmas is a time for goodwill and cheer, spending your hard earned money on gifts for your loved ones and visiting family and friends.

With so many valuable presents being purchased and many of us out and about shopping or visiting relatives it gives an opportunity for criminals to strike.

We urge you not to make it easy for criminals - protect your home this winter and don't let thieves steal your Christmas.

Top tips for protecting your property at Christmas

- Avoid leaving presents and valuables on view – it's a temptation for opportunist thieves.
- If you know you are going to be out during the hours of darkness take steps to make your home appear occupied. Leave lights on or set lights on a timer to go on and off as your normal routine.
- Property mark your valuables and take photographs of them. Keep a list of make, model and serial number for your electrical items for example. Register them for free at www.immobilise.com
- Avoid keeping large amounts of cash at home.

For Further Crime Prevention Advice:-

For Norfolk dial 101 and ask to speak to your local Architectural Liaison Officer (ALO)

For Suffolk dial 101 and ask to speak to your local Safer Neighbourhood Team

- Enlist the help of neighbours if you are going away. Get them to close curtains, remove post and put the bins out. Also make sure you cancel newspapers, milk etc.
- Look out for your neighbour's property.
- Make sure callers to your home are genuine and always ask for ID.
- Never leave keys in the locks when you're out as this can make a burglar's job easier. Keep your keys in a safe place out of view and away from your doors.
- Close and lock all windows and doors when you leave the house. A walk-in burglar may try several homes before finding one that is unlocked - you don't want it to be yours.
- Dispose of gift packaging carefully. Make sure you only put your rubbish out just before collection and do your best to fold boxes to avoid advertising your new purchases.
- Use exterior lights such as low energy dusk to dawn lighting. Burglars prefer the dark to stay hidden from view.
- Motion sensor activated lights should be directed downward and fitted out of easy reach.
- Maintain doors and window frames to ensure they are strong and secure; fit secure locks and a door chain or bar.
- Fit visible window locks including rear or side windows and those above a low roof.
- Use strong, high fencing with a trellis or Prikkastrip topping.
- Secure gates with a mortice lock or padlock bolts.
- Never leave spare keys hidden outside or hanging inside the letterbox as they will most likely be found.
- Visible burglar alarms make burglars think twice; get specialist advice and consult your insurance company.

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Shopping Safely

- Never leave your bags or shopping unattended especially if you have stopped for a coffee and avoid hanging your bag on the back of your chair. In a busy environment it is easy to get distracted and even easier for a thief to steal your bags.
- Keep wallets, purses, mobile phones and tablets out of sight and bags secure, especially in crowded places.
- Keep your pin numbers separate from your bank cards.
- **ALWAYS COVER YOUR PIN** especially at checkouts. You don't know who is looking over your shoulder.
- Before inserting your card have a look at the machine to check it looks normal.
- Be vigilant when drawing money from ATMs.
- Try to pay for items on a card rather than carrying large amounts of cash or keep the amount you carry to a minimum.

Parking

- Park in a busy well-lit area or a secure car park if possible.
- Close windows, sunroof, lock doors & activate security alarms when leaving your car.
- Take valuables with you when you leave your car and if you have no choice make sure valuables and your shopping are locked in the boot. Take care no-one is watching you if you are leaving your car.
- On cold days don't leave your car unattended with the engine running, you could return to find your car has been stolen.

If you need police assistance dial **999** in an emergency or if a crime is in progress, and in a non-emergency, please dial **101**.

Wishing you a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

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