

# Retail Theft Prevention

A Guide for Businesses



**IRVINE POLICE DEPARTMENT**

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# Strengthening Physical Security

**Reduce opportunities of theft by increasing the physical security of your business and merchandise by using:**

- Closed circuit surveillance cameras
- Cable wraps and spider locks
- Secure hooks for open displays
- Recoil tethers on electronic devices
- Alcohol bottle locks
- Electronic article surveillance
- Ink tags on clothing
- Fitting room article control
- Door alarms and chimes
- Security mirrors
- Display high-end merchandise behind the counter
- Arrange counters and displays so there are no direct routes to exit

## Employee Awareness

- Greet and make eye contact with each person who enters the store.
- Observe customer's hands and hand-carried items such as purses and bags.
- Look for special boosting tools such as large bags/purses, strollers, secret pockets in vests/skirts, magnets, scissors, and bags lined with foil.
- Watch customers who seem to pay more attention to other customers, employees or security devices than they appear to be actually shopping.
- Train employees in company loss prevention policies and practices and repeat training regularly.

# What can happen when force is used during attempted theft?

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Shoplifters that are confronted by loss prevention employees may attempt to fight back to avoid arrest. Any use of force, violence or weapons can turn the situation into a robbery and result in dangerous consequences for the public.

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When confronting a shoplifter, please consider the following actions:

- Know when to walk away—don't put employees or other citizens at risk to apprehend a shoplifter.
- Remember that your safety and the safety of others is more important than merchandise.
- Contact law enforcement immediately—the sooner you call, the more likely the suspect(s) will be caught.
- Be a good witness and provide all information to law enforcement so they can follow up and safely make an arrest.



# After Theft Checklist

## Take the following steps after a theft has occurred:

- Call the police right away
- Report details of the suspect  
(i.e. gender, approx. age, race, hair color, clothing, identifying marks or scars, tattoos)
- Report vehicle information  
(i.e. make, model, color, license plate number, anything unique such as stickers or damage)
- Note type of property stolen and value
- Gather and preserve all video evidence to provide to police
- Be willing to sign a PPA
- Keep all involved employees/witnesses at the scene until police arrive

**If prosecution is not desirable, still notify the police and provide any evidence such as suspect description, video, and type of loss incurred.**

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