

## **RETAIL THEFT PREVENTION**

Your business is your livelihood, and should welcome customers, not shoplifters.

Here are some tips to help keep your business safe.

### **Customer service**

Greet customers as they enter. Do they shop or watch you? Watch their hands!

### **Store layout**

Have good visibility throughout your business.

Consider having just one entrance/exit point with a cash register set up.

### **Stock control**

Know your stock levels.

Secure valuable/popular products and/or place close to staff.

### **Train staff**

Have written policies and ensure staff know what to do if they see shoplifting.

### **Also see our related Business Security factsheets**

Closed Circuit Television (CCTV)

Staff Theft - Common Methods

Staff Theft - Prevention Tips

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Disclaimer: This publication contains only general guidelines and strategies for dealing with business security, and no guarantees or representations are made concerning their effectiveness. SAPOL accepts no responsibility for any injury or loss resulting from the application of these strategies.



**SOUTH AUSTRALIA POLICE**  
SAFER COMMUNITIES



**Government  
of South Australia**

## Customer service

Welcome people as they enter and make eye contact. A friendly 'hello' is perfect.

- Make eye contact. Being noticed is not good if you are a thief.
- Be attentive. Pay attention to customers who are watching you or cameras /mirrors instead of shopping.
- Offer assistance. Let them know you're there.
- Watch the hands! It's the hands that do the stealing.
- If there's a distraction/incident, be aware that it might be deliberate to distract you!
- Be aware of prams, trolleys or bags as they can be used to conceal items.
- Suspicious? Be helpful and ask customers if they need further assistance.
- Keep your attention on them and stay in view (checking stock, tidying shelves).
- Alert other staff members – perhaps have a code word.

## Store layout

Store layout can play an important role in preventing shop theft.

- Have an open layout, with good visibility between aisles or areas.

- If you can't easily see into some areas, use mirrors or CCTV to monitor them.
- Keep displays tidy - this helps to quickly identify if items are missing.
- Limit the number of entry and exit points to your business.
- Restrict access to staff areas and behind counters. Clearly identify public and private areas. Ensure staff have secure areas or lockers for personal items.
- Place cash registers near the exit with the cash drawer out of reach of offenders.
- Display signs to indicate your stance on shoplifting and security measures.
- See our CCTV factsheet for advice on using CCTV.

## Stock control

Regularly check stock levels. Know what has come in, gone out and what you have.

- Keeping track of inventory helps you track shoplifting losses and is a big deterrent to employee theft.
- Mapping losses can indicate if you have areas in the store that are particularly vulnerable. Change the design and open up a blind spot, add a mirror, install an obvious camera and place signage indicating your security measures.

- If certain items are being targeted, move them to a highly visible location, close to staff working areas.
- Consider secured displays or use security cables or ties to lock down items.
- Consider using electronic or dye tags on expensive or popular items.

## Train staff

Value your staff – they are your key asset in preventing theft.

- Make sure staff know how customer service, store layout and stock control play a part in crime prevention.
- Have written safe work practice guidelines for staff to follow if they see someone shoplifting. Keeping people safe must be the first consideration and property security comes after that.
- Understand how people steal - hiding goods in bags, prams or under clothing, swapping price tags, removing packaging or security tags, fraudulent returns.
- You can ban anyone from your business if you believe they have stolen, they pose a risk of stealing or persistently cause a nuisance.

