



Shoplifting prevention tips for businesses

Shoplifting affects businesses of all sizes, but proactive measures can help you to reduce the risk of retail theft to your business.

There is no typical profile of a shoplifter. Offenders vary in age, gender, ethnicity and social background, and also vary in their level of experience, motivation and method of stealing.

Common shoplifting methods

Shoplifters often:

- hide items in bags, umbrellas, prams, or under bulky coats
- wear stolen clothes beneath their own
- distract staff with an accomplice or switch price tags to pay less
- hold an item they intend to steal in one hand whilst paying for a different item with the other hand.

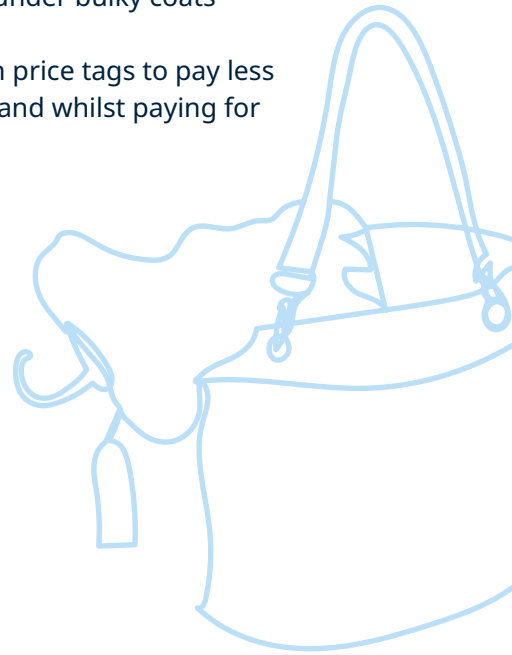
Suspicious behaviours to watch

Keep an eye on customers who:

- decline assistance or appear overly nervous
- watch staff more than merchandise
- wear out-of-place bulky clothing or carry large bags
- spend excessive time in fitting rooms or uncommon store areas
- loiter outside the store for a long time before entering.

Reducing risks

- Ensure customer service areas are adequately staffed.
- Train your staff to spot and respond to suspicious activities.
- Stay attentive to customers.
- Lock display cases and use tags or cables for high-value items.
- Install CCTV, security mirrors, and ensure good lighting.
- Only display one of 'paired' items to discourage shoplifting.
- Check the number of garments taken into and out of fitting rooms.
- Always provide receipts for purchases and conduct spot checks of receipts at the store exit.
- Display signage – make it clear that shoplifting is a crime and offenders will be prosecuted.
- Maintain an organised shop layout with clear sightlines and counters near exits.





What to do if you suspect shoplifting

- Observe the actions of the offender discreetly or monitor CCTV.
- **Avoid confrontation.**
- Record details about the incident, including:
 - › what you saw – including the offender's description, what was stolen and from where
 - › relevant times – including the time you first saw the person, the time they left the store
 - › what the offender did next – for example, they walked in the direction of..., got into a vehicle (note registration, description of vehicle, other occupants), etc.
- **Report the incident** online via the Tasmania Police Online Crime Reporting Portal – police.tas.gov.au/reportonline or call the Police Assistance line on **131 444**.

What to do in an emergency

- **In an emergency, call 000 (Triple Zero).**
- Cooperate with armed offenders to stay safe – **do not confront them.**
- Try to remain calm and hand over any cash or valuables being sought.
- If there are threats of violence or danger to life, activate your hold-up alarm or **call 000 (Triple Zero)** discreetly, and try to move to a safer location – **if it is safe to do so.**
- Observe from a safe distance and take note of as many details as you can, such as a description of the offender, vehicles, and suspicious behaviours.

Other useful contacts include:

- For non-urgent police assistance (i.e. to report an encounter where the offender is no longer at the scene) call the **Police Assistance Line** on **131 444**.
- **Tasmania Police Online Crime Reporting Portal** – report retail theft (shoplifting) online at police.tas.gov.au/reportonline.

Find out more

- For more general business safety tips – visit police.tas.gov.au or download the Tasmania Police **Business Security Audit Checklist** and **Business Risk Assessment Checklist** to find out how you can improve your business security.
- To make a report online for retail theft (shoplifting), making off without payment or fuel drive off, visit the Tasmania Police Online Crime Reporting Portal at police.tas.gov.au/reportonline.