

Shoplifting Prevention



Put a stop to shoplifting

Shoplifters assume they won't get caught. Your strategy is to prove them wrong.

The Problem

Shoplifting can cost your business thousands of dollars each year. Shoplifters may be any age, gender, or economic or ethnic background. There is no "typical" shoplifter. They often work in pairs or groups to divert the clerk's attention while they steal. They often operate when employees are apt to be less alert, e.g., at store opening and closing times, during the lunch and dinner times, and during shift changes. Shoplifters also learn to take advantage of crowded stores during peak hours. Effective prevention begins with an aware and alert staff.

Have a store policy

Management should set store policy on shoplifting and prosecutions.

Remember, if you don't prosecute, chances are the offenders will return. They will also tell their friends that your store is an easy mark.

If you see it occur

Approach the person and ask "Can I help you?" or "Can I ring that up for you?" Follow your store policy in regards to detaining a shoplifter. Follow proper procedures for making a "Citizens Arrest" and fill out all necessary paperwork required by the police.

Be aware of customers who

- Seem nervous.
- Avoid eye contact.
- Leave the store and return repeatedly within a short time period.
- Stay in an area of your business where he or she is hard to see.
- May be working in groups and try to distract you by arguing with the clerk to create a scene, falling or claiming a medical emergency.

Your best defense

- Stay alert at all times
- Greet and make eye contact with all customers
- Ask customers if they need help to let them know you are aware of their presence
- Understand your store layout – where is shoplifting most likely to occur
- Install surveillance cameras
- Post signs warning against shoplifting
- Do not place "hot" items or expensive merchandise near the exits where someone can easily grab and run