

Preventing crime through environmental design

What you can do to prevent theft / robbery

The layout of the store and design of the physical environment of your building can reduce your chances of becoming a victim of crime. This can also increase the feeling of safety among your staff and customers.

Store design

- Keep windows clear of posters, shelving and advertising that block the view into the shop. Make sure people outside can see clearly into the shop. The clearer your shop is, and the more hidden you are from the street, the greater the opportunity for theft and robbery.
- Install good quality CCTV system. Put a video monitor and surveillance camera at the entrance so customers can see themselves in the monitor when they walk into the shop.
- Put up clearly visible signs that let customers know you have security measures, such as cameras and trip wires.
- Make sure the interior of the shop is well lit during work hours and after hours.
- Put the cash register at the front of the store near the main entrance. This will help deter thieves, as they will have to walk past your staff when entering or exiting the store.
- Make sure all areas of the shop can be seen from the sales counter.

- Place the sales counter to increase visibility of merchandise.
- Keep shelves low so staff can see over them.
- Eliminate hidden or blind spots that make it easier for someone to steal items.
- Keep displays full and in order so staff can see at a glance if something is missing.
- Keep expensive goods in the back of the shop – on display but under lock and key.
- Train staff in loss prevention and detection techniques. Do they know how to spot and stop shop thieves?

Territorial design reinforcement

- Make sure the entrance to the store is clearly defined. This will avoid customer confusion and give good reason to question people who loiter in entrance ways.
- Make sure there is no easy access to the roof, from either inside or outside the building.
- Ensure entrances and exits are monitored and controlled.
- Make sure the exterior of buildings and loading areas are well lit, with no blind spots or hidden areas.
- Put up signs in loading areas to display designated delivery hours, giving staff justification to question trespassers.
- Try to ensure parking areas are clearly visible.