

LOCK IT OR LOSE IT



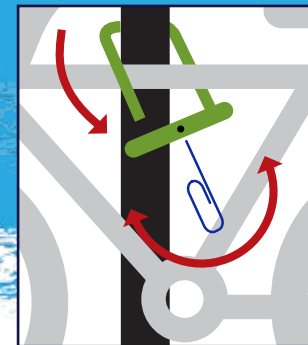
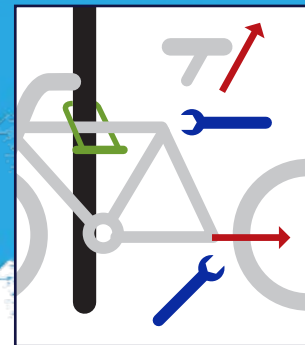
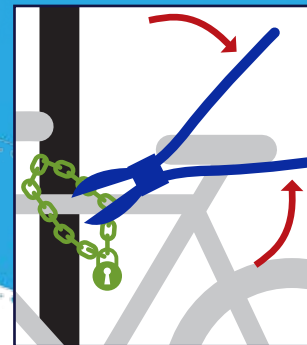
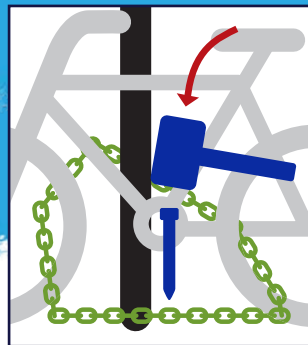
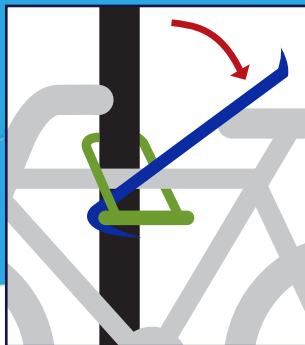
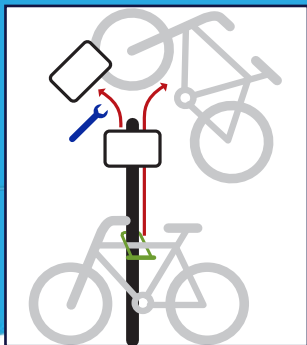
A short guide to protecting your bicycle



**METROPOLITAN
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Common bike theft techniques – and how to avoid them

Lifting

How they do it

Thieves will lift the bike (and lock) over the top of the post it is locked to. If it is a signpost then the thieves may remove the sign to lift the bicycle clear. Sometimes the post itself is not anchored securely and can be lifted clear of the bike and the lock.

How to avoid it

Always lock your bicycle to a 'closed structure' that is well secured to the ground. If you must lock to an 'unclosed structure' then make sure it is more than 5 metres high and well secured to the ground (thieves will stand on shoulders to pass your bike clear if the structure is low enough).

Levering

How they do it

If it is possible, thieves will insert tools, such as jacks or bars, into the gap between the bike, lock and stand to lever the lock apart. Thieves will even use the bike frame itself as a lever by rotating it against the stand or any other stationary object it is locked to. Either the bike or the lock will break – the thief doesn't mind which – after all, it's not their bike!

How to avoid it

Always fit your lock so that as much of the lock as possible is filled by the stand and bike (and maybe helmet). This will make it harder to insert tools between the lock and the stand. Never lock your bike by the 'top tube' (AKA 'crossbar') alone as this will allow for the bike frame to be rotated against the lock.

Unbolting

How they do it

Thieves know how to undo bolts and quick release mechanisms. If you lock your bike by the wheel alone this is likely to be all that will remain when you return. If you lock only your frame then a thief may remove your wheel(s). If your wheels are stolen and you leave your wheel-less bike to pick up later the thief is likely to return before you and remove the rest of your bike.

How to avoid it

Always lock both wheels and the frame of your bike to the stand and remove any quick release components such as saddle and wheels. If you only wish to carry one lock then secure skewers are a good idea. These are available from most good cycle shops and do not allow unauthorised removal of wheels, meaning you only need to secure your frame to the stand.

Cutting

How they do it

Thieves are known to use tinsnips, bolt cutters, hacksaws and angle grinders to cut their way through locks and chains to steal bicycles.

How to avoid it

Don't make it easy for thieves. Some locks, such as coil or cable types, can easily be cut using readily available hand tools. More robust cutting equipment can be difficult to defend against. Expect to spend up to 20% of the value of your bike on your lock. Look at www.soldsecure.com and manufacturer guarantees and security ratings to buy the best lock you can.

Picking

How they do it

Thieves can insert tools into the locking mechanism and 'pick' it open.

How to avoid it

Most good locks are designed to resist 'picking'. Check that yours is one of them. Also, make it harder for the would-be thief by making the locking mechanism harder to get at. Secure your lock tightly to the bike and stand with the mechanism facing into the bike. Whilst this makes things a little more difficult for you it will make things a lot more difficult for a lock 'picker'.

Striking

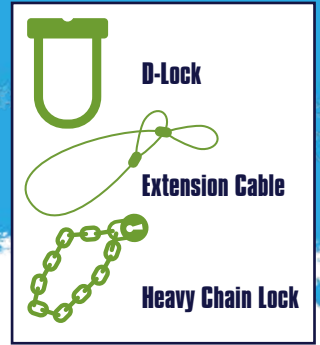
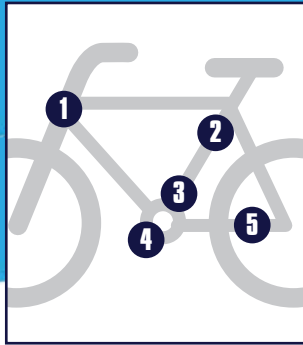
How they do it

If your lock rests upon the ground thieves may use a hammer and cold chisel to split the securing chain or lock.

How to avoid it

Always ensure your lock is fitted so that it cannot rest upon the ground or other immovable surface. This will allow the lock or chain to move if it is struck and keep your lock or chain in one piece.





Locking your bike

- Lock both wheels and the frame to a bike stand or strong immovable object.
- Lock 'tight' so your bike is hard to manoeuvre when parked.
- Secure your lock so it does not touch the ground.

The above advice will protect your bike against the most common bike theft techniques.

It is always best to use two locks. Go for different types of lock, for example a strong D-lock and a sturdy chain lock. This means that a thief will need different tools to break each lock, making theft less likely.

Register your bike*

Keep a record of your bike's make, model and frame number. Without it the police may not be able to return your bike if they recover it. It is free and easy to register your bike at: www.immobilise.com

Other methods of security tagging for identification include:
www.datatag.co.uk
www.alpha-dot.co.uk
www.smartwater.com
www.selectamark.co.uk

* Do this when you buy it.
You'll never get round to it otherwise.

This is where you may find your bike frame number:

1. Near the handlebars
2. Below the seat post
3. By the pedals
4. Underneath the pedals
5. Towards the back wheel

Buy a decent lock (or two)

Before visiting a bike shop check www.soldsecure.com to see which locks are most secure.

Expect to pay £40 upwards for a secure locking system.

Locks are not for life.

Keep your security up to date.

Get insurance

Check if your home insurance already covers your bicycle when it is away from your home. Also, check that the total value of your bike is covered.

If you have an expensive bike it may be necessary to insure it separately.