



CRIME PREVENTION & SAFETY ADVICE



MEET AND GREET

•When customers enter ensure they are greeted by staff. It's known as 'the three-to-five second rule'. This shows perspective shoplifters that your staff are paying attention.

If a thief thinks they've been spotted they're more likely to leave



KEEP IT TIDY

•Clear visibility across the shop floor tells a thief that everything is shipshape – and that surveillance is also probably first class. Keep things security friendly, with uncluttered, wide aisles where possible, thereby making it extremely difficult for them to steal unnoticed



SAFETY IN NUMBERS

•For as much of the day as possible, try not to be alone.
•Thieves target stores where there is only one member of staff. More eyes in the store, means you're more likely to spot a thief, so have a few members of staff and make sure they're trained in how to spot shoplifters.



CRIME MAPPING

•Take a look at this area as if you are seeing it for the first time, then work out what you can do to protect it. Can you improve the surveillance? For example, can you see it from the till? Try making the area more visible by repositioning or lowering stock and shelving. Consider placing more staff here or even displaying the items elsewhere.



ELECTRONIC TAGGING & CCTV

•Tag your items with 'Electronic Article Surveillance'. Anti-theft systems encompass a wide range of devices and technologies.
•A correctly installed and security accredited anti-theft terminal (and tagging system) at a store entrance is a statement to potential shoplifters that 'this store is protected'.
•CCTV should be used as not just a detection aid but a prevention aid. Ensure there is good signage and screens to show customers that CCTV covers all of the store. All staff members should be trained how to operate the system to monitor suspicious persons.



PERSONAL SAFETY

•You can't predict who's coming into your shop or how they will behave. Shoplifters could respond aggressively when challenged.
•Never accept threats and violence from anyone towards you or your staff. This is a very serious offence and shouldn't be dismissed. Dial 999 or 112 immediately.
•Employers should conduct a risk assessment in conjunction with Health and Safety directions. Always trust your instincts and only engage a potential shoplifter if it is safe to do so.
•If you feel confident with the situation, keep a safe distance and then ask them if they need any help or if they require a basket or a bag. If you're feeling uncomfortable, be polite, step away and quietly alert your manager or security team.
•If you believe they have stolen an item – phone Carlow Gardaí on 059 9136620 or 999/112.
•Give a clear description of the suspect and the direction of travel. Note any accomplices and mode of transport if possible



COULD YOU SPOT A SHOPLIFTER?

There are a number of tell-tale signs that flag up a shoplifter. But remember, while the following don't necessarily mean the person is guilty – and be aware that you are responsible for your behaviour, both legally and commercially – we recommend that you keep an eye on shoppers who:

- seem to be watching you and the staff rather than shopping and may be waiting for the right moment to steal an item
- seem to want to keep your attention and talk for the sake of it – possibly because an accomplice is elsewhere stealing
- look like they're taking little notice of your products
- seem a little nervous and possibly pick up random items with little interest
- keep refusing your offer of help or assistance
- frequently enter your store and never make a purchase
- want you to unlock and open cabinets but don't buy anything

WHAT TO DO IF YOU SEE A SHOPLIFTER IN ACTION

If you see them take something then ask them politely to put the item back but be careful to keep your tone neutral and back off if you feel threatened. Always be sure they've taken something before you speak to them – and only if you feel it's safe to do so.

Once you're sure that they have stolen an item, call 999 or 112.

Never accept threats and violence from anyone towards you or your staff. This is a very serious offence and shouldn't be dismissed. Dial 999 or 112 immediately.

SO WHAT IS THE LAW? WHAT CAN YOU DO?

ARREST WITHOUT WARRANT

4.–(1) Subject to subsections (4) and (5), any person may arrest without warrant anyone who is or whom he or she, with reasonable cause, suspects to be in the act of committing an arrestable offence.

(2) Subject to subsections (4) and (5), where an arrestable offence has been committed, any person may arrest without warrant anyone who is or whom he or she, with reasonable cause, suspects to be guilty of the offence.

(3) Where a member of the Garda Síochána, with reasonable cause, suspects that an arrestable offence has been committed, he or she may arrest without warrant anyone whom the member, with reasonable cause, suspects to be guilty of the offence.

(4) An arrest other than by a member of the Garda Síochána may only be effected by a person under subsection (1) or (2) where he or she, with reasonable cause, suspects that the person to be arrested by him or her would otherwise attempt to avoid, or is avoiding, arrest by a member of the Garda Síochána.

(5) A person who is arrested pursuant to this section by a person other than a member of the Garda Síochána shall be transferred into the custody of the Garda Síochána as soon as practicable.

(6) This section shall not affect the operation of any enactment restricting the institution of proceedings for an offence or prejudice any power of arrest conferred by law apart from this section.

In other words – if you suspect that someone is about to or has committed an offence that has a power of arrest i.e. Theft – any person can arrest them if they believe they are going to abscond and they must hand them over to the Gardaí. This is a decision for you and your staff to make.

This is the criminal law applicable to this issue.

Theft – Section 4 Criminal Justice (Theft and Fraud Act) 2001

A person is guilty of theft if he or she dishonestly appropriates property without the consent of its owner and with the intention of depriving its owner of it.

There may be civil law implications if you accuse someone who is innocent which has resulted in non- challenge culture developing.

Report every crime no matter how small because it may be part of an ongoing scheme. By reporting a crime you may stop someone else becoming a victim or someone becoming a repeat offender. Gardaí do care about you, your staff and your business. You can contact Carlow Garda Station on 059 9136620

FOR FURTHER ADVICE:

<https://www.garda.ie/en/crime-prevention/protecting-your-business/>

