

Shoplifters Cost ALL of us Money!!



This brochure was prepared as a public service by the Chicago Police Department, Preventive Programs Section. The material contained herein shall not be reproduced in part or its entirety without the written permission from the Department. It is the policy of the Department to provide services without regard to race, sex, color, natural origin, handicap or age.

A Telecommunications Device (TDD) for the Deaf allows hearing impaired persons to communicate with the police 24 hours a day in emergencies and non-emergencies by calling (312) 922-1414 (TDD).

For non-emergency information for the Deaf during business hours, call (312) 744-8006 (TDD).

For information regarding this brochure, write to: Commander, Preventive Programs Section, Chicago Police Dept., 3510 S. Michigan Ave., Suite 4013SW, Chicago, Illinois 60653

(11/00)

TOOLS OF THE SHOPLIFTER

- **Hands** - thieves often are adept in the art of palming, much like a magician's trick.
- **Boxes** that are wrapped and tied in order to resemble ordinary suit boxes, but are actually rigged with a flap, hinged top, bottom or end-which works like a trap door.
- **Suction cups**, clips and similar devices are attached to rubber bands and then used to pull items up their sleeves or into their coats.
- **Gloves or mittens** with large flaring cuffs are also used, as well as elastic banded bloomer style skirts in order to conceal items.
- Musical instrument **cases** or **bags** similar to those carried by doctors are other aspects of the charade.
- **Large pockets** built into coat linings; large cuffs on coat sleeves are very common also.
- **Galoshes** worn without fastening at the top so small articles (e.g. jewelry, etc..) may be dropped into them.
- **Newspapers** or magazines are folded to conceal tapes, compact discs, etc...
- **Baby buggies**, carriages with false bottoms, and shopping bags with concealed pockets have been used. Books are also hollowed out to hold small articles.
- **Dresses** made with pockets at the back of the neck into which small articles (e.g. jewelry, etc..) can be dropped while arranging the hair.
- **Large bandages** or casts on the hands or arms can be feigned in order to conceal items.
- Unbuttoned **topcoats** with the pockets cut through the lining disguise hands that appear to be in the pocket- but actually are free inside the coat and able to pick up articles.
- Maternity clothes (**dresses**) disguising pouches to conceal items.
- Many professional thieves are capable of carrying merchandise between their legs while **appearing to walk normally**.



BUREAU OF STAFF SERVICES
Preventive Programs Section

REDUCING THE LOSSES ASSOCIATED WITH SHOPLIFTING



Chicago Police Department
Preventive Programs Section
3510 S. Michigan Ave., Suite 4013SW
Chicago, Illinois 60653
(312) 745-5823
T.T.Y. 745-6885 (Hearing Impaired)



What employees can do to help prevent retail theft.

RESPONSIBILITY

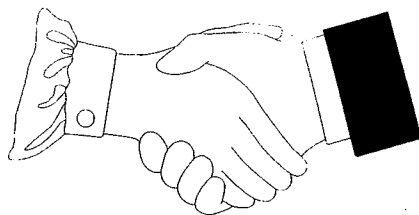
EVERY JOB in retailing, on the floor and behind the scene, carries with it the responsibility for control of theft and inventory loss. Uncontrolled losses affect the financial stability of the store, employee raises, working conditions, and even job security. Following are suggestions to assist employees in fulfilling their responsibilities in **LOSS PREVENTION**.

USE YOUR EYES. Watch all customers. Learn to observe stock, people and events in your area. Constantly **test yourself**. How much do you really see when you look around the store? It takes practice to stretch powers of observation. **An alert, wide-awake employee is the store's most effective deterrent to theft.**

BE ATTENTIVE. **Acknowledge customer's presence** with a word, nod or smile even when busy with another customer or chore. Watch customer movements, particularly hands. Prompt, courteous service encourages customers, discourages thieves.

OPENLY WATCH AND FOLLOW anyone you think has intentions of stealing. Remain friendly and courteous. **Your alertness can prevent theft.**

BE HELPFUL. If you see a customer take something, go into closing remarks such as, "May I wrap that for you?", or "Will this be cash or charge?" If the individual does not respond by replacing or paying for the merchandise, try to sell him something. If you are positive the person has hidden merchandise on his person or baggage, call the manager or initiate other store procedure(s) on apprehension. **Never accuse anyone of stealing.**



GIVE YOUNG PEOPLE PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT. Youngsters are easily tempted to take merchandise. Discourage loitering and handling of merchandise. Noisy, badly behaved young people should be asked firmly, but courteously, to leave. Do not threaten or accuse young people of stealing.

Groups of three or more teenagers roaming the store should be reported to the manager.

BE A GOOD MERCHANDISE HOUSEKEEPER. Keep stock in order. A good salesperson knows the stock and can recognize instantly if it has been disturbed or if items are missing. Be particularly attentive whenever there is high customer activity.

BE KNOWLEDGEABLE. Know the prices of your merchandise so you can detect price tag switching. If you discover a switch has been made, simply say, "***I'm sorry, a mistake has been made. This is the wrong price for this merchandise.***" Know stock supplies, sale procedures, delivery schedules so you will not have to leave the floor or area uncovered while you check.

BE CAREFUL. **Don't let customers distract you while handling money.** Keep the cash drawer closed, sales books, refund forms, electronic tag equipment, etc. well out of customers reach. **BE DISCREET.** Discuss suspects and/or actual cases of shoplifting only with the manager or persons authorized to deal with theft. Speak in a low

tone so you cannot be overheard by customers. Never comment about one customer to another customer.

KEEP CALM. Do not act impulsively. If in doubt about theft, do not take action. Keep in mind the store depends on the good will of its customers. Neither you nor the store can afford to make a mistake.

MAKE SUGGESTIONS. If you are aware of a weakness in store procedures, physical layout or security programs, mention it to your manager along with suggestions for improving the situation.

BE SUSPICIOUS when any of the following are observed:

Customers who . . .

- Stand at the end of the counter/walk behind it,**
- Hang around counters handling merchandise without making an effort to buy it,**
- Spend too much time around displays,**
- Carry unfolded umbrellas, baggage, shopping bags or open purse on one arm while holding a wallet in the other hand,**
- Wear loose, baggy clothing or heavy, bulky clothing in warm weather,**
- Take too many items into the fitting room.**
- Split up - one engaging the salesperson and the other roams around,**
- Send the salesperson away on the pretense of wanting another size, kind or color,**
- Seem to be watching everything in the store,**
- Place packages, newspapers, coats or hats on counters,**
- Walk around distracting employees with conversation and/or pamphlets,**
- KNOW YOUR STORE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES REGARDING RETAIL THEFT.**