

PACKAGE GUARD

The Package Guard

Guide to Guarding Against Package Theft

Start protecting your packages



Package theft on the rise

The rise of package theft is not a surprise when we consider that in 2016, [51% of purchases](#) were made online. That's a lot of online shopping, but more

important to us, that's a boatload of packages. The carriers, like FedEx, UPS, USPS, and others do make an effort to ensure that those packages get to you. For instance, if the packages are valuable or the driver feels insecure about the neighborhood, they can require a signature on delivery. However, this isn't always the case, and a package left unattended is an opportunity for theft. It's that opportunity that's important to understand if we want to understand package theft. Like many other crimes, package theft is a crime of opportunity. It usually does not involve significant planning or forethought. Instead, for property theft to occur an unattended package and someone willing to steal an unattended package only have to converge. When that happens, an opportunity is created, and your package is gone, and there usually isn't any getting it back.

How to protect your packages

So package theft is on the rise because they're more packages being delivered, more of those packages are valuable (maybe they contain your iPhone), and therefore more opportunity for a would-be thief and an unattended package to converge. However, it's hard to know exactly how many packages are stolen in a



given month. Part of this is because it's difficult for police to devote the time and energy to investigate package theft when they face budget cuts and other, let's face it, more serious crimes that need their

response. We went into depth about the response that police can make (find it [here](#)). Their main effort is in education and prevention, and often package theft gets lumped into the larger category of theft and burglary. In other words, package theft is a serious issue, and you shouldn't expect your package to be recovered if it was stolen.

It's clear that package theft is increasing and will continue to do so as we order more and more online. This is particularly relevant if you live in the suburbs. Suburbs present a particularly prime location for package theft because houses often have open porches and residents often are in an economic bracket allowing them to do online shopping. These neighborhoods also feel more secure than urban communities, making it more likely that a delivery driver would feel comfortable leaving a package unattended. At the same time, suburbs are more accessible than rural areas. Cities also have a high rate of package theft, but in urban areas, it's not uncommon for residents to live in apartments with a desk that holds deliveries. To learn more about where package theft occurs check out this [post](#). This risk can be increased if you order a lot of packages, often have these packages left on your porch, and if your porch is accessible but out of direct line of sight from the street. These [factors](#) can make you more at risk.

What we can do to prevent it

If you're concerned about package theft, plenty can be done. The most significant response that we can do works towards, its prevention. As a crime of opportunity, package theft is susceptible to eliminating that opportunity. There are



many strategies that you can take to reduce the chance. Beyond this, here's a [list of things you might do](#). These include requesting that the major package couriers not leave packages without a signature. Inconvenient? Perhaps, but definitely safe. If this isn't an

option, then you can at least pay attention to the tracking and plan on being home when the package will be delivered. You can also develop a stronger network within your neighborhood. Neighbors watch out for each other and become familiar with the regular traffic patterns of the community. If your neighborhood is a tight-knit community, it is more resistant to crime, including package theft. Beyond this, often you can request couriers leave your package with a neighbor. You can also use a package locker service that Amazon, FedEx, and UPS provide, or install your own, though a big locker or cabinet on your porch might be a bit unsightly. Finally, [surveillance cameras](#) and video doorbells can be useful, but they are limited and easily circumvented. Here's a [comparison chart](#) listing ALL the devices dedicated to preventing package theft.

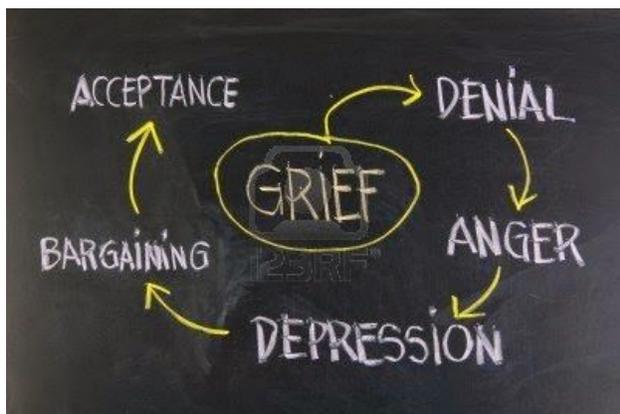
What to do if your package is stolen

Okay, so we've talked about why package theft is an issue, what we can do to prevent it, and hopefully, you've taken some of these steps to keep your deliveries safe, but let's say you've already had a package stolen.



What do you do then? Well, the Kubler-Ross model

outlines five stages of grieving. We've revised that for [package theft grief](#). So have



fun with that... But seriously, there are a

few things you can do. First, if your police department accepts them, you can fill out a police report on the theft.

This helps them track package theft in the area, and it is a necessary step for

many insurance claims. After that, [check what insurance will cover](#) your package.

Carriers often provide basic insurance, but usually, that covers less than \$100 of the cost and only happens after you've gone through their process. Homeowner's insurance will also often cover package theft up to a certain value (varies widely from company to company). If the package was stolen from your car, it might also be covered by your auto insurance. In any of these cases, you might be able to get some money for your lost package, but be ready for a complicated process.

After looking at insurance, you can also look to the vendor or courier to try to recover some of your losses. Amazon provides the [A-to-Z guarantee](#), which is a tremendous, customer friendly policy that addresses many of the dangers of shopping online. [FedEx](#), [UPS](#), and [USPS](#) all provide have a process for filing an insurance claim or tracking down the stolen package. These processes are a bit complicated, and often have to be initiated by the shipper. The process begins with a claim, which has to be done within a certain amount of time from the expected delivery date. Outside of this window, you're out of luck. The claim then allows the courier to search for the package. Once they've either found the package or determined that it was delivered but stolen, they evaluate how much insurance will cover the package. The links above provide more detail about how to work with each of these companies to turn the tragedy of package theft into a better outcome. In the end, these are not the first choice option for dealing with package theft. Instead, it's much better to put your energy into prevention.

Conclusion

Package theft is a growing concern. As we spend more money online and do



more of our shopping through online retailers, this phenomenon is only going to increase. Package theft is based on opportunity and presents a much lesser risk

than breaking and entering. The best strategy for confronting the problem of package theft is prevention. Cameras, signature deliveries, close-knit neighborhoods, and the [Package Guard](#) all provide good countermeasures to package theft. By investing in prevention, you can save yourself the frustration, grief, and struggle of trying to recover your stolen package. While you probably will be able to make an insurance claim, it often becomes more effort than it's worth. So, here, again, are some [good steps](#) to prevent package theft. We hope that you never face package theft, and we're here to help you avoid it!

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