

Walking and Bicycling Resources



Locking Your Bike

If you have ever parked your bike on the street or outside your home you have likely thought, "will my bike be here when I return?" While no foolproof locking strategy exists, most thieves look for quick, easy targets. Here are some simple strategies to deter bike thieves and help you keep your bicycle for many years to come.

PARK IN A SECURE LOCATION

Well-traveled, well-lit areas that have proper bike racks are the best place to lock. If you can, don't leave your bike overnight in short-term parking. If you have to lock up outside overnight, consider using several locks.

REMOVE ITEMS FROM YOUR BIKE

Remove lights, bags, pumps and cyclocomputers to prevent thefts of opportunity.

REMOVE QUICK RELEASE LEVERS

Features that allow quick release on bike seats, suspension forks and wheels can make your life easier, but leave you more susceptible to theft. If you plan to lock your bike for long periods or areas with safety concerns you may wish to replace these parts with bolts. Some newer bolts can be adjusted with an allen wrench (also known as a hex key), which is easier to carry with you than an open-end wrench. You can also purchase 'leashes' that allow you to lock your seat to your bike.

GET A LOCK THAT WORKS AND USE IT EVERY TIME

Many types of bike locks exist, ranging from cable locks to heavy chain locks to U-locks with a hardened metal frame. Your local bike shop can provide more information on specific lock brands and how they might fit your needs. Once you purchase your lock, use it every time you leave your bike.



Cable lock

TYPES OF LOCKS

Cable locks are easily cut; a pair of sharp bolt cutters will do the job in under 15 seconds. They are generally not recommended.

Chain locks offer good security but the security is dependent on the quality of the padlock. Chains



Chain lock

also add weight to your bag or bike, and in some cases weight up to 10 pounds.

U-locks come in many sizes and varieties and are considered to be the most secure standard lock type. U-locks are lighter than chains, and sturdier than most cable locks. The small "pocket lock" is more difficult to attack with a crowbar. Generally speaking, higher-cost U-locks provide more security, but are also heavier.



U-lock

LOCK YOUR BIKE TO SOMETHING STRONGER THAN YOUR BIKE LOCK

A chain link fence, wood post or small tree can quickly become the weakest link in your security. By picking a bike rack or other heavy piece of furniture you will eliminate this weakness and deter theft.

WHAT TO DO IF YOUR BIKE IS STOLEN

If your bike does get stolen, take these steps to maximize your chances of recovery:

- As soon as you buy a bike, register your bike serial number with the police or local campus security. You can find most serial numbers on the bottom of the crankshaft.
- If possible, take a photo of the bike that could help identify a recovered bike as yours; if the serial number can be photographed, take a picture of that as well. Keep these photos in a safe place.
- If your bike is stolen, report it to the police as soon as possible. Include the serial number in your theft report. If you did not record the serial number beforehand, check with the bike shop where you purchased the bike—they may have a record of your serial number.
- Check community bulletin boards, internet web forums (like Craigslist), and pawn shops for your stolen bike.
- Check with the local transit agency to see if it turned up in the lost/found.



Serial number location