

STEER CLEAR OF BIKE CRIME



A guide to motorbike and scooter security



Home Office

LOCK IT, OR LOSE IT

Theft doesn't have to be an inevitable part of owning a motorbike or scooter. A lot of vehicle crime results from criminals seeing opportunities and taking them. But you can outsmart most criminals by following the simple advice given in this booklet.

Remember, most bike crime can be prevented.

Don't give criminals an easy ride.



SECURE M

TEMPTING TARGETS

Motorbikes and scooters are an easy target for thieves if they are not secured, as they can be wheeled away or bundled into a van in seconds. The last thing any rider wants is for their pride and joy to be stolen. It may be insured for theft, but the hassle and time it takes to get the insurance money to replace it will be terrible, and your insurance premiums will go up because you've made a claim. Motorbike and scooter theft is big business, so it's important to keep your machine safe by taking steps to protect it and by choosing the right security devices.



HOW TO CHOOSE

Basically, the more security you can put around your motorbike or scooter, the less attractive it will be to thieves. No single product can cover all possibilities, but if you invest in both mechanical **and** electronic security devices, you will reduce the risk of becoming a victim of theft.

Always look for products recommended by 'Thatcham' or 'Sold Secure', as these have been tested to make sure that they meet high standards. Some security devices may get you a discount on your insurance (up to 10% for immobilisers). Check with your insurance company to see whether having a particular immobiliser or other security device would reduce your premium.



MEASURES

You can get more information about security devices by visiting the Sold Secure website at www.soldsecure.com, phoning the Sold Secure Helpline on 01327 264687 or emailing Thatcham at: security@thatcham.org.

SECURITY MEASURES

ELECTRONIC SECURITY

Get a combined alarm and immobiliser professionally fitted as these devices really put off would-be thieves. If someone tampers with your bike, the alarm will go off and the engine will not turn over so thieves cannot ride the machine away.

Alternatively, you can buy a basic alarm or immobiliser. Although some do-it-yourself systems are available, we do not recommend these. Also, for any discounts on your insurance cover your alarm or immobiliser must be professionally fitted by a trained dealer or installer. Features to look for when choosing an alarm or immobiliser are 'low current drain' (to avoid flattening your battery) and 'comprehensive warranty support'. Some systems even provide roadside assistance cover.



SECURE Y

MECHANICAL SECURITY

Chains and padlocks are the most versatile forms of mechanical security. They can be difficult to carry around but some come with bags. A good disc lock will put off casual thieves, but most will only delay a professional for a matter of seconds. **Don't rely on a disc lock alone.** U-locks are better but make sure they are long enough to secure the bike to an object which cannot be moved.

Whatever type of lock you choose, always try to secure your motorbike or scooter to something which is solid and cannot be moved (like security rails or a ground anchor), because the most common method of stealing motorbikes and scooters is simply to lift them into the back of a van. Also, try to keep the lock (and chain if used) off the ground as this makes it harder to break.



MARKING AND IDENTIFICATION SYSTEMS

Put security marking on as many parts of your motorbike or scooter as possible. This will make it less attractive to thieves and will also increase the chance of getting your machine back if it is stolen and then recovered. Some new motorbikes and scooters come with marking systems as standard, although you can buy systems from a reputable dealer for fitting afterwards.

Mark parts with the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) (also known as the frame number), registration number or some other unique identifying number linked to a recognised database that keeps data to the Loss Prevention Council (LPC) Standards 1224 and 1225, which have been approved by the police.



YOUR BIKE

The crime prevention officer at your local police station will be able to give you advice and further information on suitable marking systems.

AT HOME

Remember that your motorbike or scooter is still at risk of being stolen when it is parked at your home. Ground anchors are good for protecting your machine at home. If you have a garage, make sure it has good locks. Some motorbike alarms (including silent alarms) can alert you if someone is trying to get into your garage.



STOLEN GOODS

A lot of stolen motorbikes and scooters, or their parts, are sold on to the public. If you are offered a 'bargain' you could be buying something that has been stolen. Stick to reputable shops and dealers.



CRIMESTOPPERS

0800 555 111

If you have any information about criminal activity, particularly concerning motorbikes and scooters stolen for spare parts or items stolen from these machines and then sold to the public, you can contact Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111. You do not have to give your name.



SECURE P

BUYING A NEW MOTORBIKE OR SCOOTER

When buying a **new** motorbike or scooter, always ask yourself the following questions:

- Does it have an insurer-approved alarm, immobiliser or mechanical security? Check with your insurance company beforehand to find out which security features may reduce your premiums.
- Does it have an insurer-approved security marking system?
- What other security features does it come with and are they approved by insurers?
- What extra insurer-approved security can the dealer offer?



BUYING A SECOND-HAND MOTORBIKE OR SCOOTER

When buying a **second-hand** motorbike or scooter, always ask yourself the following questions:

- Have you seen the original registration document?
- If you have seen the registration document, does it appear genuine, does it have a watermark, and are there any alterations?
- Is the seller's name on the registration document?
If not, why?



PURCHASE

- The true identity of the bike is established by the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN), also known as the frame number. Has the machine's frame or engine number been tampered with? If you are not sure, compare it with a similar number.
- Do the frame (VIN) and engine numbers of the machine match those on the registration document?
- If electronic security is fitted, does the owner have the correct Certificate of Installation, transmitters or touch keys and so on?
- Can the seller provide proof of their identity and address?
- Is the seller insisting on meeting you away from the registered address, possibly to avoid being identified or traced?
- Before buying privately, consider checking with one of several private companies that hold information on vehicles whether the motorbike you are interested in has been reported stolen or seriously damaged, or is still subject to finance. Details can be found at the website www.direct.gov.uk/en/motoring/buyingandsellingavehicle/index.htm



Do not part with any money if you have any doubts. Remember, if the deal looks too good to be true, it probably is. If the provenance of a bike is in question then it would be right to question the maintenance record and its roadworthiness. Don't put your life at risk. Contact the crime prevention officer at your local police station for advice, or if you think the bike may be stolen call Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.



SECURITY

SECURITY TIPS

- If your motorbike or scooter doesn't already have one, get a 'Thatcham' or 'Sold Secure'-approved electronic immobiliser professionally fitted. Try to get one which is also approved by your insurance company.
- If your bike has a high monetary or sentimental value, consider having a Thatcham Cat 5 security system professionally fitted. These systems send an alert to a control centre if your motorbike is stolen, track it and by remote operation prevent its engine once stopped from being re-started.
- If you have a security device, use it and keep your keys with you when you leave your machine.
- Always put the steering lock on.
- Never leave your keys with the motorbike or scooter, even for a short time. Always keep your keys in a safe place when you are at home.
- Wherever possible, use parking spaces which are built especially for motorbikes and scooters and have stands or security loops for you to secure your machine to. Also, look for car parks that display the Park Mark® sign showing they belong to the police Safer Parking Scheme.
- When you are not using your motorbike or scooter, put it in your garage (if you have one) and make sure it has good locks. If you do not have a garage, installing a ground anchor is a good bet.
- Get the main parts of your machine marked with the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) (frame number), registration number or some other unique identifying number, ideally one linked to a recognised database that keeps data to the Loss Prevention Council (LPC) Standards 1224 and 1225. If you have used your own markings, make sure you have a record of them.



Y CHECK



- Take steps to defeat criminals who steal number plates by thinking about fitting theft-resistant ones that conform to the DVLA standard.
- Cover your machine if possible.
- Whenever possible, avoid leaving your helmet or other possessions on the motorbike or scooter, or in luggage space or in panniers.

BIKE WATCH SCHEMES AND ASSOCIATIONS

There is considerable opportunity for anti-theft schemes that encourage motorcyclists and others to spot motorbike and scooter theft and come up with new ideas to tackle it. Contact your local crime prevention officer or the various motorcycle support groups such as the Motorcycle Action Group or the British Motorcyclists' Federation for information about local groups and advice on how to set up new ones (see the 'Contacts' section at the end of this leaflet).



SECURITY

PROTECTING YOUR OFF-ROAD MOTORBIKE

Off-road bikes (such as trials, motocross and enduro bikes) are at special risk of theft. Also, if they are stolen they are more difficult to trace because the majority are not currently registered on the DVLA database.

This means that the police cannot put the details of stolen off-road bikes on their database ready to be retrieved quickly when the bikes are recovered. So it may not always be possible to return off-road bikes to their rightful owners. However, DVLA can register your off-road bike for free so that its details (frame and engine numbers) are placed on DVLA's and the police's computers. Your bike will be given a 'Q' registration mark and, providing it is not used on a public road, you do not have to display a number plate unless you want to. You will also be given a log book (registration certificate – form V5C). You will not be able to ride the vehicle on the road unless it is completely legal and you have paid the correct Vehicle Excise Duty (VED) road tax. You do not need an insurance or MOT certificate for use on private property. Contact your local DVLA office to discuss this further (their number can be found at www.direct.gov.uk/en/motoring/index.htm under 'Useful contacts' – 'Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) contacts').



Y CHECK

OTHER MEASURES

CONTROL OF REGISTRATION CERTIFICATES

If you own a motorbike or scooter it is in your best interests to stop its registration certificate (form V5C) falling into the wrong hands and being used for stolen motorbikes and scooters. If your machine is written off by your insurer, ask your insurer for a copy of the notification of destruction and to pass the registration certificate to DVLA. DVLA now encourages insurance companies to return all registration certificates for written-off vehicles to prevent them being misused by criminals.



HOW EMPLOYERS CAN HELP

Companies which employ motorcyclists, such as couriers, should promote security awareness among their riders. They could consider, for example, including theft awareness leaflets in wage packets and providing secure parking spaces or changing areas for riders.



MOTORBIKE AND SCOOTER DEALERS

Dealers should make it standard procedure to check any machine brought in for service if they do not know its background. This is especially important if they are asked to supply duplicate keys.



CONTACT

BIKESAFE

www.bikesafe.co.uk

CRIME PREVENTION OFFICERS – you can contact a crime prevention officer at your local police station for crime prevention advice and a list of safer car parks in your area.

THATCHAM (The Motor Insurance Repair Research Centre) – for information on immobilisers and other vehicle security devices.

Colthrop Lane, Thatcham,
Berkshire RG19 4NP

Website: www.thatcham.org

Email: security@thatcham.org

SOLD SECURE – for a list of recognised security products.

Phone: 01327 264687

Website: www.soldsecure.com

Email: admin@soldsecure.com

ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH INSURERS

(ABI) – for information on insurance group ratings and vehicle security.

51 Gresham Street, London EC2V 7HQ

Phone: 020 7600 3333

Website: www.abi.org.uk

Email: info@abi.org.uk

VEHICLE SYSTEMS INSTALLATION

BOARD (VSIB) – for a copy of the list of fully accredited installation companies. Companies covered in Part VI of the list are accredited to deal with motorbikes and scooters.

Bates Business Centre, Church Road,
Harold Wood, Romford, Essex RM3 0JF

Phone: 01708 340911

Website: www.vsib.co.uk

Email: email@vsib.co.uk

BRITISH MOTORCYCLISTS' FEDERATION

Jack Wiley House, 25 Warren Park Way,
Enderby, Leicester LE19 4SA

Website: www.bmf.co.uk

Email: enquiry@bmf.co.uk



MOTORCYCLE ACTION GROUP (MAG)

Central Office, PO Box 750, Rugby CV21 3ZR

Website: www.mag-uk.org

Email: central-office@mag-uk.org

CRIMESTOPPERS – if you have any information on motorbike or scooter crime.

Crimestoppers Trust
Apollo House, 66A London Road
Morden, Surrey SM4 5BE

Phone: 0800 555111

Website: www.crimestoppers-uk.org

Useful crime prevention advice, including this leaflet, can be found on the Home Office website.



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