**Don’t let the criminal enjoy Christmas at your expense**

**Your home**

Keep doors and windows locked at all times, even when you are in the house.

Keep presents out of sight. Large piles of gift wrapped goodies under the tree that are visible through a door or window are tempting to thieves.

Don’t leave empty boxes on display outside. Discarded packaging advertises all the new goods you have indoors.

Don’t leave car keys and handbags lying around on display.

Make it look like someone is at home when you’re going out for the evening. Leave lights on and close the curtains. If you have a burglar alarm, set it.

If you’re going on holiday over the festive period, ask a friend, relative or neighbour to keep an eye on your house.

**Your property**

Make sure all valuable property is marked. You can either postcode mark your property with an ultra violet pen, or use a forensic marking solution such as Smartwater.

Register bike frame numbers, mobile phone IMEI numbers and other identifying details on [Immobilise](http://www.immobilise.com/), the free, national property registration scheme.

The police recover hundreds of stolen items every year, and it’s much easier to prove that an item is stolen and return it to the rightful owner if it’s been registered with [Immobilise](http://www.immobilise.com/) or security marked.

Don’t carry large amounts of cash on you when you go out. Be alert, and make sure your purse or wallet is secure and hidden from view.

**Your car**

Don’t leave presents in full view on the back seat when out shopping. These can be tempting to thieves. Lock them away out of sight in the boot.

Always lock your car and make sure windows are closed, even if you’re away from your vehicle for just a few minutes. Use a steering lock if possible.

Never leave your keys in the ignition whilst your vehicle is unattended, even for a few minutes. Opportunistic thieves will often steal cars that have been left with the engine running to defrost the windows.

Don’t leave any valuables in the glove compartment. Take bank cards, mobile phones and satellite navigation systems with you. These items are on a car thieves’ shopping list.

Make sure you park in a well lit area or in an attended car park. Look out for the Park Mark award logo for [safer parking](http://www.parkmark.co.uk/)

Don’t keep your chequebook and card together. Keep your PIN confidential and don’t write it down.

Check that your home insurance adequately covers you for the value of goods in your home.

Passing stolen goods

You can make it difficult for criminals to operate by not purchasing stolen property. If you are offered a quality product at a bargain price ensure that the source is genuine.