

Tips for a crime free Christmas shop.

The tips for a crime free Christmas shop start before you leave your house, after all you don't want to come home to find the house broken into:

1. Garden tools securely locked away in the shed – Burglars will be happy to use your tools to break into your house.
2. Create the illusion your home is occupied - Radio and lights on a timer in rooms you would normally occupy, there is even a device called “Fake TV” that flashes a series of lights when it gets dark that looks like the TV is on. There are now door bells that you can view and answer from your Smartphone.
3. Lock up properly not just your windows and doors in the house, but also any gates and outbuildings.
4. Choose a “Park Mark” car park where you can <http://www.parkmark.co.uk/> . By choosing a Park Mark® Safer Parking facility you are visiting a car park that has been vetted by the Police and has measures in place in order to create a safer environment for both you and your vehicle.
5. Leave nothing in sight within your car, remove the “Sat Nav” cradle and clean the mark on the windscreen.
6. When you lock your car with the remote look for the light flash confirmation or better still try the door handle before leaving the car.
7. Now you're starting your shop watch your purse, wallet, mobile phone and handbag especially in busy places, don't leave them on display in bags or on counters while you pay, and while you're paying watch that no one is watching you entering your PIN when making purchases or withdrawing cash.
8. Time to stop for lunch or a cuppa, don't drop your guard. Mobile phone on the table, shopping by the chair, wallet or purse visible, coat, jacket or handbag over the chair; if a thief sees it a thief will steal it.
9. Need to off load some of those purchases in the car, look around are you being watched? Back to (5 & 6) above again.
10. Time go home, don't fall for any distractions while you load the car i.e. “you dropped some money” pointing to cash on the ground, holding a map “can you tell me the way to...”. While you are engaged the second person steals from your car on the other side. Close and lock your car before speaking to anyone.

Further crime prevention advice see <https://www.essex.police.uk/advice/> or ring Essex Police on 101.

If you know who is committing crime or handling stolen property call Essex Police on 101 or call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Sent by Kevin Blake to all of Essex.