

Shoplifting Facts

- More than \$13 billion worth of goods are stolen from retailers each year. That's more than \$35 million per day.
- There are approximately 27 million shoplifters (or 1 in 11 people) in our nation today. More than 10 million people have been caught shoplifting in the last five years.
- Shoplifting affects more than the offender. It overburdens the police and the courts, adds to a store's security expenses, costs consumers more for goods, costs communities lost dollars in sales taxes and hurts children and families.
- Shoplifters steal from all types of stores including department stores, specialty shops, supermarkets, drug stores, discounters, music stores, convenience stores and thrift shops.
- There is no profile of a typical shoplifter. Men and women shoplift about equally as often.
- Approximately 25 percent of shoplifters are kids, 75 percent are adults. 55 percent of adult shoplifters say they started shoplifting in their teens.
- Many shoplifters buy and steal merchandise in the same visit. Shoplifters commonly steal from \$2 to \$200 per incident depending upon the type of store and item(s) chosen.
- Shoplifting is often not a premeditated crime. 73 percent of adult and 72 percent of juvenile shoplifters don't plan to steal in advance.
- 89 percent of kids say they know other kids who shoplift. 66 percent say they hang out with those kids.
- Shoplifters say they are caught an average of only once in every 48 times they steal. They are turned over to the police 50 percent of the time.
- Approximately 3 percent of shoplifters are "professionals" who steal solely for resale or profit as a business. These include drug addicts who steal to feed their habit, hardened professionals who steal as a life-style and international shoplifting gangs who steal for profit as a business. "Professional" shoplifters are responsible for 10 percent of the total dollar losses.
- The vast majority of shoplifters are "non-professionals" who steal, not out of criminal intent, financial need or greed but as a response to social and personal pressures in their life.
- The excitement generated from "getting away with it" produces a chemical reaction resulting in what shoplifters describe as an incredible "rush" or "high" feeling. Many shoplifters will tell you that this high is their "true reward," rather than the merchandise itself.
- Drug addicts, who have become addicted to shoplifting, describe shoplifting as equally addicting as drugs.
- 57 percent of adults and 33 percent of juveniles say it is hard for them to stop shoplifting even after getting caught.
- Most non-professional shoplifters don't commit other types of crimes. They'll never steal an ashtray from your house and will return to you a \$20 bill you may have dropped. Their criminal activity is restricted to shoplifting and therefore, any rehabilitation program should be "offense-specific" for this crime.
- Habitual shoplifters steal an average of 1.6 times per week.

"Information and statistics provided by the [National Association for Shoplifting Prevention\(NASP\)](#) a nonprofit organization providing research-based shoplifting prevention initiatives including education, prevention, justice and rehabilitation programs. Contact NASP: [Click here to email us](#)