

# 10 EASY WAYS TO PROTECT YOUR LAPTOP FROM BEING STOLEN

Laptops are becoming a hot ticket item for thieves looking for an easy hit. When your laptop gets stolen, you lose a lot more than your computer and the cost of purchasing a replacement; you lose your documents, photos, e-mails, and database files. That is why it makes sense to take these simple steps to protect it.

1. Don't let it out of your sight. Wi-Fi hotspots like coffee shops can be distracting and are prime hangouts for laptop thieves. Don't leave it on a table to get a refill and don't put it on the floor behind your chair.
2. Don't leave it on the seat of your car. Hide it under the seat or in the trunk or you could end up with a stolen laptop AND a broken car window.
3. Don't leave it in your hotel room. If it doesn't fit in the hotel room's safe, take it with you or ask hotel management to lock it up.
4. Don't advertise your laptop by keeping it in a computer bag. Instead, carry it in a brief case, backpack, or large handbag.
5. Carve your name into the plastic shell. This will make it less attractive for resale and may deter thieves.
6. Write your laptop's serial number down and store it safely. It will help the police recover your laptop if it is stolen.
7. Get a laptop alarm. One alarm, TrackIT,



offers a portable, two-piece anti-theft system that uses a keychain and a miniature receiver with a sonic alarm. TrackIT's siren will sound when separated by more than 40 feet (12 meters) from the transmitter on your keychain. This proximity alarm will protect against security check-in theft, distraction theft, and ordinary carelessness.

8. Get a laptop cable lock. For around \$50, you can purchase a cable and lock that will anchor your laptop to a heavy desk or piece of furniture and prevent it from being stolen by grab-and-run thieves when it is out of your sight.

9. Get a tracking device installed. Computrace or CyberAngel can be purchased for about \$60 a year and will track your laptop's location using a stealthy piece of tracking software if it is stolen. Many

even offer a guarantee.

10. Encrypt your files. A start up password will not protect someone from accessing your data since many thieves know how to bypass it. To protect your personal information from identity theft, use a program like BestCrypt or PC Encrypt to secure your personal information.

And finally, don't forget to back up your files and keep a copy of the backup in a separate location away from your laptop. Having a backup disk in your computer bag is no good if it gets stolen with your laptop.