

3: WHERE TO PARK YOUR BIKE

PARKING & LOCKING BASICS

The first rule: Always lock it. Never, never leave your bike unlocked—even if you're leaving it for only half a minute. A thief can grab your bike in seconds. Some parking basics:

Security: Lock your bike to something that's permanent and not easy for a thief to take. Lock to a bicycle rack, a parking meter, a metal fence post, or a large tree. Don't lock to another bike, a door handle, or small tree. And if you keep your bike in a garage, basement, or on a porch, lock it.

Visibility: Park in open areas where many people pass by and your bicycle can be seen easily. **1** Thieves usually don't like an audience.

Keep It Close By: Put your bike where you can get to it fast. **2** Thieves like to steal bikes whose owners are far away.

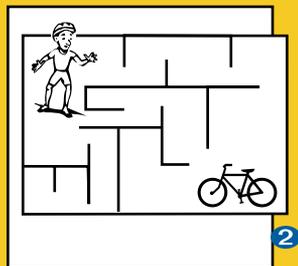
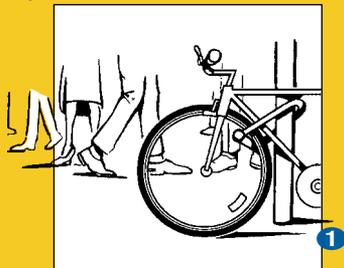
WHAT LOCKING HARDWARE SHOULD YOU USE?

U Locks: Some U locks are stronger than others; make sure you buy a strong steel-alloy lock. **3** If the manufacturer offers a warranty or insurance, register the lock and write down the lock's serial number and when you bought it. To keep thieves from prying open your lock, try to fill the space in the middle of the lock; do this by using a narrow lock or putting more stuff (like a wheel or helmet) into the lock. One drawback to U locks: you can't lock to thick objects such as street lights; for these, carry a thick cable.

Padlocks & Chains: The thicker, the better; chain links and lock clasps should be at least 3/8 of an inch thick. Look for locks and chains that are case-hardened—a process that makes them harder to cut.

Cables: Some cables are actually harder to cut than chains, because they don't snap and thieves can't pry them open. **4** Use a cable at least 3/8 of an inch thick with a lock as thick, or thicker.

Ugly Bikes: In busy commercial areas, where thieves have lots of bikes to choose from, your bike is less likely to be stolen if it looks old or just ugly.



HOW TO LOCK UP

A thief with enough time and the right tools can break any lock. But you can discourage many thieves if you follow these tips about locking your bike:

Lock the Whole Bike: You should put your chain, cable, or U locks through your frame and both wheels—taking the front wheel off if you have a quick-release hub. **5** Never lock through your wheel without locking the frame, because thieves can remove your wheel and steal the rest of the bike.

Cross Locking: A good way to foil thieves is to use more than one kind of lock. **6** For example, put a U lock through your frame and front tire, and put a cable or chain through your frame and both tires.

Placing the Lock: Thieves can break a lock by putting it against a wall or sidewalk and smashing it with a hammer. If you use a padlock, try to put it where it's not close to the ground or against a wall or another solid surface—leaving little or no slack in your cable or chain. When using a U lock, leave little or no space in the lock's middle to prevent prying.

Removable Items: When you leave your bike, remove any parts you can't lock and a thief could steal easily: a quick-release seat, horn, bike bag, pump, cycle computer, or lights. If removing quick-release parts is a hassle, replace them with permanent ones.

WHERE TO PARK

Parking Meters: Lock your bike to a parking meter if you're using a U lock. **5** Never lock to a meter with only a chain or cable—a thief will slide your bike over the top.

Bike Racks: The City of Chicago and building owners have installed thousands of ribbon-shaped racks **7** and upside-down-U-shaped racks, **8** which are very secure places to park your bike.

Sign Poles: Sign poles aren't the best places to lock your bike. Before locking to a pole, check whether you can pull it out of the ground. Also check how easily a thief could remove the sign and slide your bike over the top of the pole.



WHERE SERIAL NUMBERS MAY BE FOUND

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COMPLETE THE DATA BELOW

HEAD TUBE	MAKE
SEAT POST TUBE	MODEL
LOWER CRANK	COLOR
AT REAR WHEEL MOUNT	YEAR
	WHEEL SIZE
	FRAME SIZE
	NO. OF SPEEDS
	SERIAL NO.
	DATE OF REGISTRATION

BICYCLE REGISTRATION CARD
CHICAGO POLICE DEPARTMENT

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CHICAGO POLICE DEPARTMENT
WILL COUNTY & A
PUBLIC AUCTION
UNCLAIMED AND ABANDONED
GENERAL MERCHANDISE

CONSISTING OF: ADVERTISED ITEMS, WHITE IRON, PNEUMATIC BICYCLES, CAR TIRES, TV'S, BASSOOS, CAMERA'S, VCR'S, FURNITURE, PAINTS, LUMBER, TOOLS, SPORTS, MUSIC, APPLIANCE'S, SNOW BLOWERS, LEAD, TOOLS, 2-WAY RADIO'S, LAMP'S, MIRRORS, 4 OR 6 HOURS, TV'S, PLAYERS, TAPE PLAYERS, SPEAKERS, CAMPS, 1/2 IN. & 3/4 IN. DEEP'S, RIFLES, ETC., ETC.....
(SEE LISTING FOR A COMPLETE LIST)

ALL MERCHANDISE SOLD AS IS
ALL SALES ARE FINAL - CASH ONLY

2901 N. WESTERN AVE.
(750 S. STATE ST. AT 29TH ST.)
(773) 525-3111 TO 3112

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Parking Lots: Some public parking lots will let you park your bike for a small fee. If you forget your lock, look for an attended parking lot.

Indoors: A good way to avoid theft: park your bike indoors. Some stores and buildings allow bikes inside, if only for a short time. When parking indoors, lock your bike securely.

CUTTING YOUR THEFT LOSSES

What's the first thing to do when you get a new bike? Write down its serial number and register your bike with the Chicago police. Police recover hundreds of stolen bikes each year, but can't return most because they aren't registered. To register, fill out and mail a white registration card. 1 You can get a card at any police station (see the phone book's blue pages), most bike shops, and the Chicagoland Bicycle Federation, Room 300, 650 S. Clark St. (Call 312/742-BIKE to have one sent to you.) You can also register on-line at www.cityof-chicago.org/cp/FightCrime/Forms/BicycleReg.html.

Identifying Marks: You can discourage thieves by engraving your name or phone number in an obvious place on your bike frame. 2 Or put a card with your name and phone number inside the handlebar tube—so if you find your stolen bike at an auction, junk shop, or flea market, you can prove it's yours.

If Your Bike Is Stolen: First, find your bike's serial number if you have it. Then call the Chicago police non-emergency number, 311, and tell them where your bike was stolen. You also must give a call-back phone number. Police will call you with a report number that you can use for an insurance claim. They'll call again if they find your bike.

Police Bike Auctions: Every month except January and February, the Chicago Police auction off stolen bikes that they've recovered. 3 The auctions are announced in the *Tribune* and *Sun-Times*; call 312/747-6224 for the time and place of the next one. But if you find your stolen bike at an auction, the police won't give it to you unless you can prove that it's yours.