



Nottinghamshire Police

Crime Prevention

Advice

Protecting your arts and antiques

To speak to us call **101** or in an emergency dial **999**



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www.nottinghamshire.police.uk

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Introduction

Nottinghamshire Police recognises the high value that art and antiques hold in monetary value and sentimental value for their owner.

This guide explains how you can protect your precious art and antiques from being targeted by criminals.

Keeping detailed documentation can be crucial in helping return art and antiques to their owner if they are stolen.

These tips show how you can go about keeping a detailed inventory of your valuables.

Take photographs of your valuables

Having photographs of your valuable items can greatly increase the chances of them being returned to you if they are stolen.

Take a few photographs of each item, including the aspects of it that make it uniquely identifiable.

It can be useful if you can include the following in your photographs:

- ▶ Any distinguishing marks and hallmarks
- ▶ The object's size and dimensions, by placing a ruler next to it
- ▶ Show the front and back of the item,
- ▶ particularly paintings
- ▶ Try to use a plain background

- ▶ Take the photograph in natural light rather than using the flash facility.

Write a description of your valuables

It is far easier to write a description of your valuable item when you are looking at it, rather than trying to remember it in the event of it being stolen.

When describing an object of value, the 'Object ID' format is recognised throughout the art world and usually includes some of the following details:

- ▶ Type of object - for example, painting or clock
- ▶ Materials - for example, wood, ceramic or glass
- ▶ Measurements - size and weight
- ▶ Marking - hallmarks, signatures, any damage or marks
- ▶ Title - name of the painting or object
- ▶ Maker - creator or company
- ▶ Subject - what the object represents
- ▶ Date or period of the object - for example, art deco.

It is also useful to include any extra information that could help identify the object, for example, its colour or shape.

Once you have taken photographs and written descriptions of your art and antiques, make sure you keep them in a safe place.

It is important that they are not kept with your art and antiques.

Immobilise

The national property database Immobilise enables police to reunite stolen items with their rightful owners.

When police recover suspected stolen items, they check them against those registered on the database to see if they can locate the owner.

You can register almost any kind of item on the database for free.

Once you have registered your valuables, such as televisions, cameras, iPods, bicycles and tools, you can display stickers on your window at home to warn potential thieves that any property they might steal is registered with Immobilise and can be traced back to you.

To register your property on the Immobilise database, visit www.immobilise.com

Property marking

Property marking (also known as asset marking) is becoming an increasingly popular crime prevention technique and deterrent to criminals. It is cost effective and doesn't take long to carry out.

The idea is that if a criminal sees your property is marked, they would be less likely to steal it as the item is more difficult to sell or pass on, making it less desirable.

A thief is less likely to steal well marked property or break into premises where property is marked because:

- ▶ It increases their chances of being caught

- ▶ It makes the property more difficult to sell
- ▶ It will significantly reduce the price the item will obtain.

Visible property marking

Items can be visibly marked using stencilling kits to display your name and postcode. SelectaMark is an example of a visible asset marking product.

It is permanent as the indelible compound slightly melts on to the surface of the item, leaving the text secure. Offenders could try to file off the stencilling, but this would leave a mark and look suspicious when trying to sell your item on.

Invisible property marking

Invisible marking systems use a forensically coded solution to mark items. These systems include SmartWater and SelectaDNA.

If an item is stolen and later recovered by police, it is examined using an ultraviolet light, which highlights the presence of the solution on the item.

Each batch of solution has its own unique code, registered to the buyer. This means items marked with your solution can be proven to be yours and returned to you. If you use this type of property marking system, it is vital you register your kit, or police will not be able to reunite you with your items if they are stolen and later recovered.

Ultraviolet marker pens can also be used. They can be bought from most supermarkets and stationery shops. You can use the pen to write your name and postcode on valuable assets without detracting from their value and appearance.

PROTECT REGISTER IT

Register your property for FREE and improve your chance of getting it back if it is lost or stolen

IMMOBILISE PROPERTY CRIME

www.immobilise.com

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