



How to prevent and respond to package theft

Do you love the convenience of home delivery but worry that unattended packages could be stolen from your mailbox or outside your home? Your concerns are warranted. Package thieves, commonly referred to as porch pirates, are a real problem as consumers continue to go online for more of their shopping. According to a 2020 Package Theft Statistics Report, this particular criminal activity is on the rise. More than 40% of respondents reported having a package stolen, up from 36% in the 2019 report.¹

Fortunately, there are steps you can take to stay ahead of porch pirates and prevent package theft at your home.

Sign up for delivery alerts.

The United States Postal Service (USPS), United Postal Service (UPS), FedEx, Amazon and other major delivery companies offer notifications for package updates. When you subscribe to these services, you will receive texts or emails letting you know the status of your package and when it is delivered. This gives you the opportunity to retrieve your package promptly, before a thief has the chance to go after it.

Improve your home security.

There is no shortage of reliable and effective tools to combat package theft. For instance, a security camera or video doorbell can be set up to monitor your front porch and property. Just the presence of a visible camera may discourage thieves from targeting your home.²

Another option is to have packages delivered to a parcel drop box on your property as this will conceal your delivery from the street. For maximum security, choose a lockbox. Some styles have a slot for easy drop-offs and can then be unlocked with a key. Others remain locked, so you would need to coordinate with USPS, UPS, FedEx and other delivery drivers to ensure they have access.³

Provide special instructions.

Some services allow you to instruct drivers on where to leave your package, such as a back door or other discreet location. You can also ask USPS, UPS and FedEx to require a signature when delivering a package. And it's not just carriers that can help protect your purchases. Ask retailers to use nondescript packaging whenever possible so your deliveries don't catch the eye of thieves. During checkout, simply indicating that your purchase is a gift may ensure that it's delivered in a plain box.³

Avoid the front porch altogether.

In some cases, it's worth giving up the convenience of home delivery to ensure your package makes it safely into your hands. If you're often away from home or you're expecting a particularly valuable package, consider alternative destinations for your delivery.

You can use the Hold for PickUp option to collect a package at your local post office through USPS.⁴ Likewise, you can pick up packages at FedEx and UPS locations or specify a different address for your deliveries, such as a neighbor's house. FedEx and UPS even have local partner merchants, such as pharmacies and grocery stores that will accept and hold deliveries on your behalf.³

If you purchase from Amazon, you can select a locker at checkout as an alternative delivery option. It will be delivered free of charge to one of more than 2,800 locations nationwide. When your package is ready, you will receive a six-digit code that you can use to retrieve it within a three-day period.²

Have you had a package stolen?

If you have a package stolen from your property, act quickly and reach out to:³

- The retailer to replace or refund the stolen purchase
- The carrier to file a claim to report your missing package
- Your credit card company to see if you have any package protection benefits
- The local police to possibly locate your package and prevent more thefts in your area

The United States Postal Inspection Service has been around for a long time and arrests thousands of mail and package thieves each year.⁴ Implementing some of the steps related to home security, special instructions and alternative delivery locations could prevent you from being a victim of these crimes.

Visit [Nationwide.com/solutionseries](https://www.nationwide.com/solutionseries) to learn more.



¹ "2020 Package Theft Statistics Report," C+R Research, [crrresearch.com/blog/2020-package-theft-statistics-report](https://www.crrresearch.com/blog/2020-package-theft-statistics-report), (accessed Sept. 16, 2021).

² "How to Keep Packages From Being Stolen," Consumer Reports, [consumerreports.org/theft/how-to-keep-holiday-packages-being-stolen](https://www.consumerreports.org/theft/how-to-keep-holiday-packages-being-stolen) (Nov. 25, 2020).

³ "Tips & Tools for Preventing Package Theft," Nyrmah Reina Terreforte, [safety.com/how-to-prevent-porch-package-theft](https://www.safety.com/how-to-prevent-porch-package-theft) (June 10, 2021).

⁴ "Mail & Package Theft," United States Postal Inspection Service, [uspis.gov/tips-prevention/mail-theft](https://www.uspis.gov/tips-prevention/mail-theft) (accessed Sept. 16, 2021).