



How To Spot A Shoplifter

Can you identify a shoplifter? That's an important question because shoplifting costs Edina businesses hundreds of thousands of dollars every year. These 15 points are effective ways of identifying and handling shoplifters. Reduce your risk by practicing these strategies.

- Watch the eyes. Shoplifters' eyes are constantly in motion, looking for clerks and customers. Shoplifters will look at merchandise just long enough to know it's what they want to steal.
- Follow hand movements. A shoplifter might use one hand to distract you while stealing with the other.
- Carefully observe people who seem anxious and refuse assistance.
- Pay attention to customers who loiter around a certain area, handle many items, but make no attempt to buy.
- Watch people who carry a coat or other items under which something could be concealed.
- Observe large or open purses and shopping bags carried on the arm or shoulder.
- People might try to conceal merchandise under oversize or loose-fitting clothing. Watch for coats or jackets worn out of season.
- If a customer walks awkwardly, try to determine why. Women might carry many items under a dress. Shoplifters might wear long underwear under baggy pants and these techniques make walking difficult.
- Be alert to people who drop things. This might distract from the hiding of merchandise, even though you're only a few feet away.
- Keep track of customers who carry items around the store or go into out-of-the-way areas.
- Be careful of people who repeatedly send you away by asking for other sizes or colors or who monopolize or distract you with constant chatter.
- Be especially attentive if a group comes into the store and then splits up.
- Watch customers who group together to block your view of their hands.
- Be alert to people who walk through the store with unwrapped items such as luggage or other sizeable pieces.
- Be wary of customers who come and go several times without buying. They might not need to purchase anything because you're giving it away.

For more information, contact the Edina Police Department, 952-826-1610.

EDINA POLICE DEPARTMENT

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