



CYCLING FACT SHEET No. 9

Keeping your bicycle secure is a simple matter

Each year in Western Australia, about 7,000 bicycles are reported as stolen. Most of these have not been locked and very few are ever recovered.

There are several types of bicycle lock on the market, ranging from cheap plastic-coated cables through to more robust chains, armoured shackles and immobilisers.

Cable locks are light to carry and have the advantage of flexibility. They are easy to wrap around other objects but even the larger-diameter versions can be cut quickly with the right tool.

Chains are also flexible and slightly more robust but can still be cut fairly easily by a thief using the right tool and technique. Both cable and chain locks are best suited to short-term parking.

Shackle loops, commonly called 'D' or 'U' locks because of their shape, are made from hardened steel and resist cutting. Although they provide the best security, these locks are solid and heavy. Their rigid design and small opening make them ideal for locking a bike to a railing but they cannot be used for thick poles.

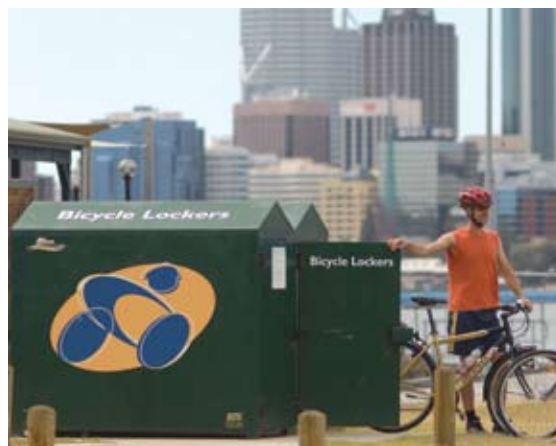
Regardless of the lock you choose, it will offer little protection if not used correctly.

Always secure your bike, even when it is inside a building. Riders should never lock the bicycle to itself as it can be easily lifted and carried away.

Try to find a U-rail or other immovable object that is situated in a well-lit area.

If using a shackle, position the bike frame and wheels so that they take up as much of the open space within the D-portion of the lock as possible. The tighter the lock up, the harder it is for a thief to use tools to attack the mechanism.

Some U-rails have a hinged bike lid attached for added security. These polycarbonate covers enclose the bike and rail entirely, being then secured with a standard padlock



Hundreds of bike lockers are located around the Perth metropolitan area and these give even greater protection from potential thieves. The lockers are free to use but cyclists must provide their own padlock. To prevent people reserving empty lockers, only those containing bicycles are permitted to be locked.

The low recovery rate for stolen bicycles is due mainly to a lack of identification. Engraving your driver's licence number under the bottom bracket of the frame will enable authorities to return recovered property. If you don't have an engraver, your local bike shop, service club (Lions, Rotary and Apex) or nearest bicycle user group may offer a free engraving service.

It is worthwhile considering insurance if you own a more expensive model. Some home and contents insurance policies cover bicycles if they are securely locked within your premises. A few will even cover the bike when it is away from home, so check with your insurer.

This fact sheet is one of a series dealing with the use of bicycles for recreation and transport in Western Australia. The series looks at a range of cycling-related topics including ride routes, touring tips, maintenance, safety, road rules, insurance and product reviews. You can find more cycling fact sheets online at www.transport.wa.gov.au/cycling

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