

# Laptop & Mobile Device Physical Security Dos & Don'ts!

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**M** [www.umass.edu/it/support/security/laptop-mobile-device-physical-security-dos-donts](http://www.umass.edu/it/support/security/laptop-mobile-device-physical-security-dos-donts)

## DO:

### **Treat your laptop and smart phone like cash.**

Leaving your laptop or mobile device unattended in plain sight is as tempting for thieves as leaving a wad of bills in the open. Always keep your electronics in a secure spot to deter theft.

### **Register your device with the University Police.**

[Project Protect](#) is an initiative to register valuable property (e.g., laptops, smartphones) with the UMass Amherst Police Department (UMPD). The UMPD will record identifying information regarding your property and issue a theft-deterrent decal indicating that the device has been registered. By registering your devices, you can also help UMPD locate them in case they are lost or stolen.

### **Keep devices off the floor- or at least between your feet.**

Leaving your belongings out of sight makes it more likely that you will forget them and makes them more tempting targets for thieves. If you must put them on the floor, keep them between your feet where you are less likely to forget them.

### **Enable a passcode or password for each device.**

A strong password is your first line of defense for your information if your laptop or cell phone is lost or stolen.

### **File a police report if you suspect your device has been stolen.**

Report any stolen belongings to the [UMass Police Department](#).

### **Consider a motion detector or alarm.**

[Alarms and motion detectors](#) are available for electronic devices and will be activated if they are unexpectedly moved out of a specified range.

**Note:** UMass Amherst IT does not support alarms and motion detectors.

## DON'T:

### **Don't leave your devices in your car.**

Valuables left in plain sight, even in a locked vehicle, are tempting for thieves. If you must leave your belongings in your car, make sure that they are stored out of sight (e.g., in the trunk).

### **Don't leave it for "just a second," no matter where you are.**

Keep your electronics on you at all times. It only takes one unguarded moment to lose your possessions.

### **Don't use your device to save yourself a seat in the Learning Commons.**

The Learning Commons, Recreation Center, and Dining Commons are the locations that report the highest rates of theft on campus. Leaving your belongings, including electronic devices, out to save a seat is the easiest way to make them vulnerable to theft.

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Many thanks to [OnGuard Online](#), whose materials served as the basis of this checklist.