



THEFT PREVENTION GUIDE

400 & 500  
State Street  
Block  
Association

THE 2020 ULTIMATE PACKAGE





This guide is developed by the 400-500 State Street Brooklyn Block Association (<https://400500statest.com/>) and is intended to be the ultimate guide to preventing package thefts on our blocks.

This guide is more than just a quick list of the same old hackneyed tips, because we synthesized these suggestions from three sources:

- Tips we found researching many articles on the topic
- Tips from our Precinct
- Tips offered by our members

What will distinguish our guide is that a lot of 400-500 State Street neighbors are providing input about what techniques have worked for them, so that solutions are practical for our blocks and, hopefully, for all parts of Brooklyn and beyond.

Moreover, the list has three sections:

General Suggestions  
High Tech Suggestions  
Alternatives to Home Delivery

For each suggestion offered, we note the downsides of each approach, as well as the advantages.

This guide will contain a variety of suggestions that will help people no matter what kind of housing they are living in (a house, an apartment) and no matter what kind of budget they are on.

The guide is an evolving work-in-progress. Let us know if you have any suggestions.

# General Suggestions

**1. RELATIONSHIPS WITH CARRIERS.** Work with delivery companies to establish safe locations for deliveries at your address. Build a good relationship with the people who deliver your packages.

**2. ASK YOUR CARRIER** to place package in an area out of plain view. Or in a certain place on your property where it is in plain view! Depending on your circumstances.

**3. SIGNS.** Instruct the carriers not to leave packages.

**4. KEEP THE AREA AROUND YOUR FRONT PORCH STOOP, YARD, ETC.) CLEAR AND VISIBLE.** This is a burglary prevention tip often shared by police officers. Thieves want to be able to get to and from your doorstep undetected. When they're likely to be seen, they're more likely to choose another target.

**5. REQUEST NONDESCRIPT PACKAGING.** When possible, ask senders not to announce where the package is coming from. Sometimes this is possible through requesting a gift shipping option.

**6. NOTIFICATIONS AND REAL TIME TRACKING.** Schedule packages to arrive when you're home. Set up notifications to track your package, to be sure you are home the package arrives. Most delivery services offer options for mobile notifications throughout the delivery process. Set them up so you'll be the first to know when a package is delivered.

Downside: If you are not home or able to get right home, this is of little utility.

**7. REQUIRE A SIGNATURE ON DELIVERY.** Shippers offer signature requirements.

Downside: Extra fees. What if you are never home when the carrier comes?

**8. BUDDY UP WITH A NEIGHBOR.** Ask your neighbor to grab your packages and you grab hers. You can do this for each other. Maybe one of you is typically out in the early part of the day and the other is typically gone in the late hours.

**9. RESCHEDULE DELIVERY** or ask for a package hold when on vacation.

**10. WATCH OUT FOR PACKAGE THIEVES DRESSED AS DELIVERY PEOPLE.** Someone on the 500 Block caught a package thief on tape who was dressed to look like a delivery person. Here is a screen shot which shows the man is meticulously crossing the recipient's name off the package.



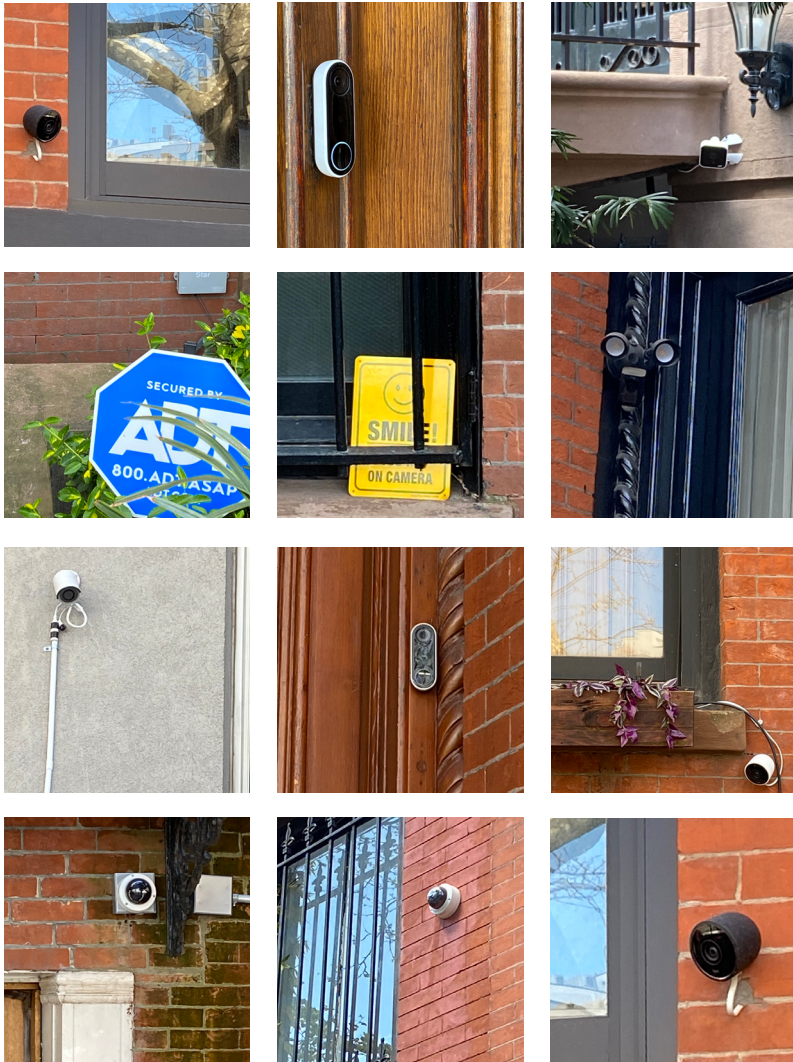
**11. CALL 911 BEFORE CONFRONTING A PACKAGE THIEF CAUGHT IN THE ACT**

In the above example, because the homeowner saw the package thief attempting to steal the package, he immediately dialed 911 and then he ran out of his home and yelled at the thief, who ran away.

We are NOT suggesting that you should confront a criminal caught in the act. But, if that is your inclination, make sure you first dial 911 and report that a crime is taking place. In the above, example, the police caught the thief!



## High Tech Solutions



**12. SECURITY CAMERAS.** For deterrence. Several homes on our streets have already done this and are willing to share their advice and amateur technical support.

**13. "SMART" DOORBELLS.** Video doorbells. Typically, these detect motion when people come to your property, you can receive notifications on your phone, tablet or PC, and you can see, hear and speak to visitors in real time from anywhere. Again, this is more about deterrence because people have come to understand that these doorbells are additional cameras.

Additional Way to Boost Utility of Cameras: Add a sign that says "Smile, You are On Camera!"

**14. ELECTRONICALLY LOCKABLE BINS ON YOUR DOORSTEP.** These are padlocks that work with compatible boxes that delivery people can put packages in. They are managed by mobile apps that can open the lock box and let you track package deliveries from major companies. Delivery drivers can use the lock's built-in scanner to scan a package and unlock the box if it is an expected delivery that's addressed to you. If it is not, the box won't open. These containers can be secured to your property. This measure reportedly has a significant effect on reducing theft as packages are not visible once delivered and secured in a weatherproof, locked container.

Note: No one on the block had any anecdotal experience to share regarding this solution. But someone reportedly looked in to this option but thought the bin was very ugly and would mar the look of the front of their home.

**15. ELECTRONIC LOCKS THAT ALLOW KEYLESS ENTRY INTO YOUR HOME.** Connects smart locks and WiFi in-home cameras to an app that allows you to control the locking and unlocking of your door, even when you are away from home. When orders arrive, you can pre-authorize a delivery which unlocks the door for the delivery person allowing her to slip the package inside your door and close your door before it automatically locks. This process is all captured on the WiFi camera you connect to the app and can be watched live or after the delivery with a recording.

Downside: You are letting a stranger into your house. What if they do not close the door securely?

Note: No one on the block had any anecdotal experience to share regarding this solution.

# Alternatives to Home Delivery

## **16. BUY ONLINE AND PICK UP IN-STORE.**

**17. USE LOCKERS.** Major postal companies, retailers, and even convenience stores have gotten in on the business of package security. Some even provide lockers for rent. You can get your package delivered to a certain location and pick it up at your leisure.

Additional Downside: People have reported that these lockers fill up quickly and need to be checked often.

**18. GET YOUR PACKAGES DELIVERED TO YOUR OFFICE.** You are more likely to be at work during delivery hours.

Additional Downside: Check your workplace policies to ensure you are being compliant with policy prior to adding your workplace address to any online order.

**DOWNSIDE TO ALL SUGGESTIONS IN THIS SECTION: EXTRA COST AND TIME AND DIFFICULTY CARRYING HOME HEAVY PACKAGES.**