How can I protect my computer from theft?

Q: How can I protect my computer from theft?

Answer

To help protect the MIT community from the loss of computers - particularly vulnerable laptops, as well as other small electronic devices - we continually review new products and services that may be of value.

Note: None of these products fall under the waiver of retention policy for equipment theft as part of the MIT Insurance Program.

Cables and Locks

These vendors have devices which physically lock down your computer equipment to prevent a thief from walking away with it.

- Compu-Gard - Swansea, MA - 800.333.6810
- KSL Security - Waltham, MA - 617.253.6367

STOP Tags

This product can be of value in laptop loss prevention and computer recovery. Laptop Tagging and Registration using the STOP (Security Tracking of Office Property) tag is offered by MIT Police Crime Prevention Unit.

STOP tags are a loss prevention measure and are a visible deterrent against theft of small electronic devices. Once applied it takes 24 hours for the glue to cure. Then it takes up to 800 pounds of pressure to remove the tag. If removed, it leaves a tattoo stating stolen property. This video demonstrates how difficult it is to remove a tag once glued. Registration allows for police to quickly find the rightful owners of stolen or lost laptops.

See the schedule and further information.

Additional Options

GovConnection carries a few anti-theft devices with discounts for the MIT community. Just visit the catalog in Ecat and search on the term “theft” to find other theft-related products. Office supply stores, such as Staples, also carry these types of products.

For a more technical solution, several companies make software that when installed on your laptop will attempt to locate it through a tracking device. The following list of these products is not supported or vetted by MIT:

- Computrace LoJack for Laptops (by Absolute Software)
- LocateMyLaptop
- LaptopLocate
- PC PhoneHome
- PC Retrieve
- Undercover (by Orbicule, for Mac OS X)