An Garda Síochána
Crime Prevention Information Sheet
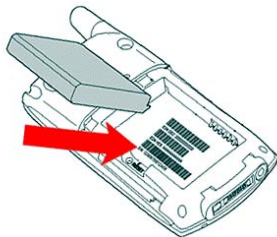
Mobile Phone Theft Prevention Advice

The following practical measures can help in preventing and reducing mobile phone theft;

Register your mobile phone with your service provider

Take careful note of your unique 15 digit mobile phone International Mobile Equipment Identity (IMEI) number

Each mobile phone has an individual serial number called the IMEI number, which can be identified by the mobile phone service provider's network. It is a 15-digit number on the back of your handset under the battery and can be found on most handsets by pressing *#06# on your phone keypad. The IMEI will appear on the screen.

You should record your IMEI number in case your mobile phone is lost or stolen. Your mobile phone service provider may liaise with Gardaí about a lost or stolen handset and, if found, your handset will be able to be identified by the number.

Thieves have been deterred from stealing mobile phones with the introduction of IMEI 'blocking'. Blocking an IMEI on a mobile phone network prevents a mobile phone from being used with any SIM on any mobile network.

Your mobile network provider is able to block the use of lost or stolen mobile phones and unblock recovered mobile phones on their network.

Enable the PIN Security feature and keep your Phone locked at all times

Your mobile phone SIM card will contain a PIN that can help protect your phone from unauthorised usage. Consider changing this PIN when you first get the SIM card. Follow the manufacturers instructions to change the PIN.

Locking your mobile phone to your SIM card

SIM-locking your mobile phone is a security precaution that you can set (see user manual). When this feature is activated, a PIN will have to be entered on the handset keypad before it can be used with another SIM card. Activating this feature will minimises unauthorised use of your handset.

Locking your SIM card

Your SIM card also has a security feature that requires a PIN to be entered each time the mobile phone is turned on. Calls cannot be made using your SIM card without entering this PIN (with the exception of the emergency numbers 112 and 999).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON THIS OR OTHER CRIME PREVENTION ISSUES, PLEASE CONTACT your local GARDA CRIME PREVENTION OFFICER or visit the Garda website at www.garda.ie

The PIN is for the SIM card only, not the mobile phone. So if the SIM is put into another phone, the PIN for the SIM card will need to be entered before any call is made.

The SIM card is identified by the network by its electronic serial number-the International Mobile Subscriber Identity (IMSI) number.

Unblocking your SIM card

If you have entered you PIN incorrectly three times, your SIM card will become blocked. If this occurs, you will be required to obtain an unlock code, more commonly known as a PUK code (Personal Unblocking Key) from your mobile phone service provider. Once you have entered the PUK code, your phone will ask you to create a new PIN number.

When out and about, keep your mobile phone out of public view, be streetwise and always be aware of your surroundings.

Never leave your mobile phone behind in an unattended vehicle.

Property mark your phone with unique personal letters or numbers.

Avoid making calls or texting on your phone while crossing the road.

If making or receiving a mobile phone call in public, always do so with your back up against the wall or a shop window etc so that you can see around you and reduce the opportunity to be attacked from behind.

If you a have a smart phone, consider downloading a location finder application.

If your mobile phone is lost or stolen, contact your mobile phone service provider immediately to suspend your service and prevent unauthorised calls being made and billed to you.

Your provider will block your SIM card and IMEI number to prevent your phone from being used on the mobile network.

Report the loss or theft to An Garda Síochána, providing identification numbers for your SIM card and IMEI number. This information may assist in the recovery of your mobile phone.

The advice contained in this information sheet is not intended to be exhaustive or absolute. Nothing contained in this publication should be interpreted as mandatory, obligatory or designed to conflict with any statutory regulations.

Always report stolen phones to your local Garda Station.

Remember to supply serial numbers and details of security markings.

Never buy devices from untrustworthy sources.

Useful Contacts and Links

The Garda National Crime Prevention Unit, Garda H.Q., Harcourt Square, Dublin 2. Tel: (01) 6663362, Fax: (01) 6663314 Email: crime_prevention@garda.ie

An Garda Síochána
www.garda.ie

Vodaphone:	*1907*
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Meteor:	*1905*
eMobile:	*1800 690 000*