



Top Ten Tips for Preventing the Underage Sale and Theft of Knives

1. **Is it worth it?** - Does the volume of knife sales justify the risk if you get it wrong? Consider the safety of your staff and the prospect of enforcement action.
2. **Partnership Work** - Work with police, trading standards and other partners to ensure you know the local issues and respond appropriately in a joined-up approach.
3. **Training** – Ensure all staff receive training on age restricted products and an awareness of knife crime. Review this regularly and conduct ongoing training. Role plays can be particularly useful.
4. **Secure your stock** – Restrict customer access - locked display units are preferred. If you cannot do this, consider using 'dummy' display products. Packaging should be robust enough to ensure the knife can not be easily removed and instantly used e.g. blister packaging.
5. **Shop Floor** – If you do display knives on the shop floor do so in a prominent location so staff presence can both increase surveillance and the offenders' perceived risk of detection. Staff should have a clear and unobstructed view of the knife display. Good quality CCTV is also essential – ensure cameras are positioned appropriately to capture any theft and to obtain a clear facial image of sufficient quality to identify the offender.
6. **Set Clear Rules** - Display operating and crime prevention signage in prominent locations so your customers know exactly what you expect them to do. By setting rules, you are preventing offenders claiming they were unaware of them. If customers breach these rules, then consider refusing the sale.
7. **Challenge** – Staff shouldn't be afraid to challenge or refuse a sale and should be supported by management. Ask for ID and check it. Are there other aspects of the customer's behaviour which are suspicious? You don't have to refuse a sale solely on grounds of age e.g. are they aggressive or under the influence of drink or drugs? Use a 'refusals register' and, if possible, build this into electronic point of sale technology.
8. **Stock Checks** - Knives should be regarded as high-risk items and regular stock checks should take place. If any are stolen the risk to staff and the public is high. Don't underestimate the damage to your company's reputation should a knife, involved in crime, be traced back to your store.
9. **Share Intelligence** - Maintain a record of all criminality and 'suspicious incidents'. Share information on repeat offenders and trends, to all staff working at your store and relevant head office contacts. Share this with other stores within the business, and your local police team. Consider sharing this wider amongst neighbouring businesses via a Business Crime Reduction Partnership (BCRP).
10. **Reporting Crime** - Record full details of incidents and report to the police at the earliest opportunity. Good CCTV and witness statements are key to securing a successful prosecution.