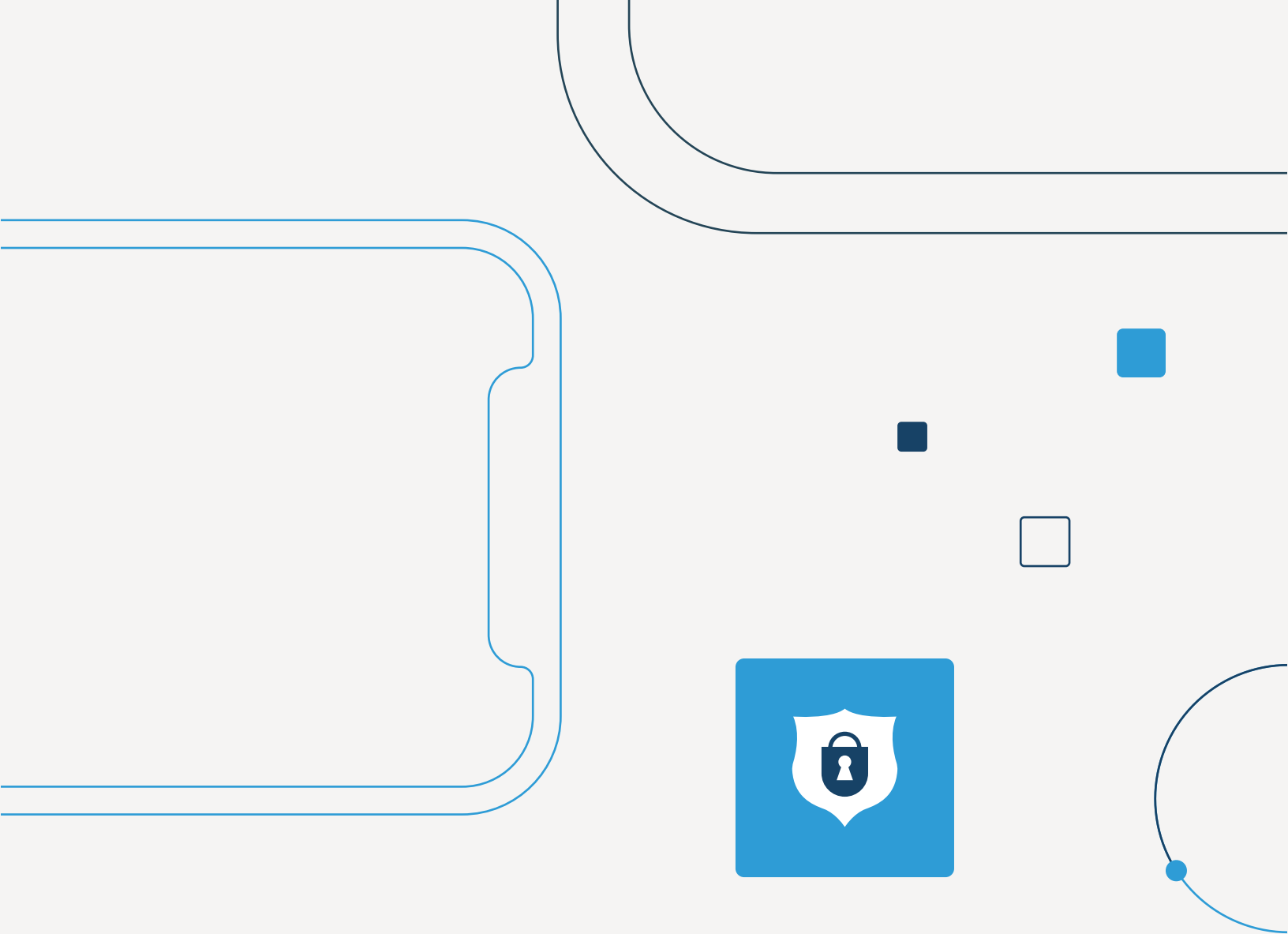


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# Mobile Theft & Loss Report

2018





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Comfort tackles your security

Theft is transversal to any location

Anything can happen, but we got your back!

01.

# INTRODUCTION

Knowing Theft

The Methodology



## Knowing Theft

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Prey has reached the 10-year milestone as a company in the theft and device tracking industry. We have seen theft evolve with the appearance of smartphones; we saw mobile ownership skyrocket in numbers, as well as the shift of towards mobile data, which increased the risk and consequences of losing these mobile devices.

Today, we have set our focus on better understanding this shift and showcasing its current state to the world. After all, we have always stated that awareness is the best line of defense against any sort of threat.

In this first report, we will review 2018's theft and loss statistics gathered through Prey users' experiences and tackle the following questions:

- | What types of theft or loss are the most recurrent?
- | Where are the most common places these events occur?
- | Who poses a bigger threat to your device, you or a thief?

## The Methodology

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The team behind the report has reviewed and filtered all recovery stories that users have shared with Prey, both anonymously and publicly through our platform, and reduced the sample to 829 detailed loss or theft cases.

**Note:** The cases were filtered to remove blank cases, tests, and those recovery stories lacking information that could alter the final sample.

Each case included the following anonymous data: type of event (theft or missing, and their different versions), the location where these events occurred, a brief story, and information regarding the device type and responsibility for the event.



# 02.

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## THEFT AND LOSS STATISTICS

Types of Theft and Loss by Frequency

Top Locations Where Each Type of Events Occurs

Uncommon scenarios



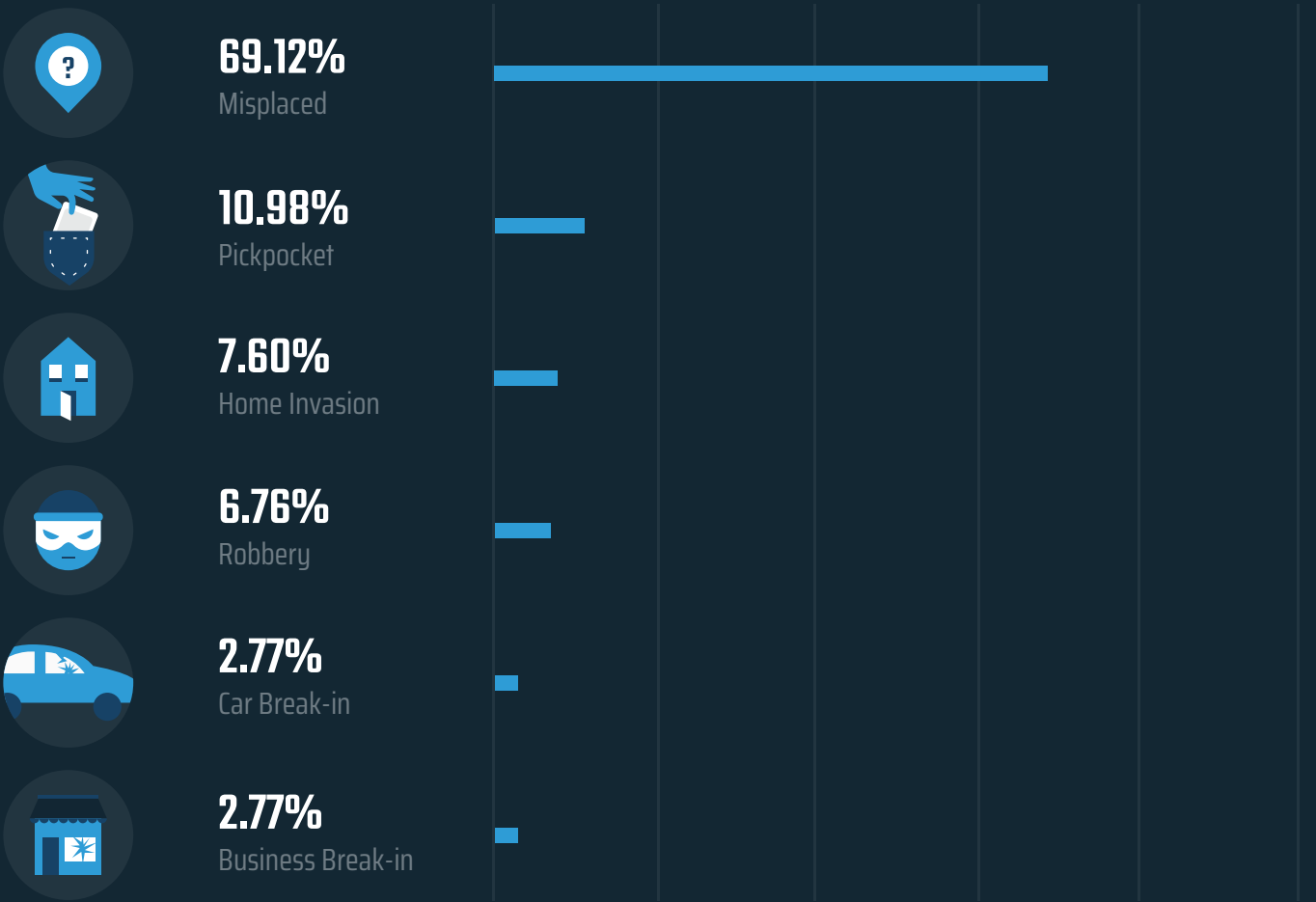
# Types of Theft and Loss by Frequency

According to the device loss cases we received in 2018, the team identified six categories in which all theft or loss stories can be sorted: Misplaced, Pickpocket, Home Invasion, Robbery, Car Break-in, and Business Break-In.

2018's data showed as a clear scenario in the theft & loss scene: people, most of the time, simply lose their devices.

On the other hand, we saw how Home Invasions equal and eventually surpass Robberies, reaching a 7.6 percent of occurrence.

## Theft or Loss Type

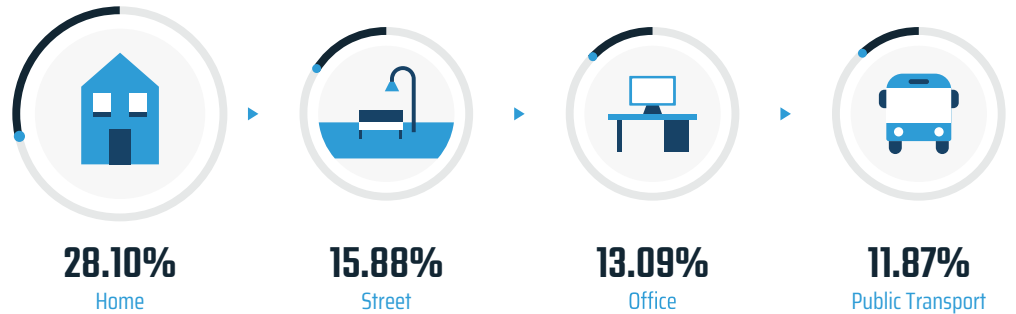


# Top Locations Where Each Type of Events Occurs

Home Invasion, Business Break-in, and Car Break-in have been excluded to the certainty of their location. We asked our users the place where the theft or loss had occurred, and analyzed stories that hadn't shared the fact directly with us to correlate the information.

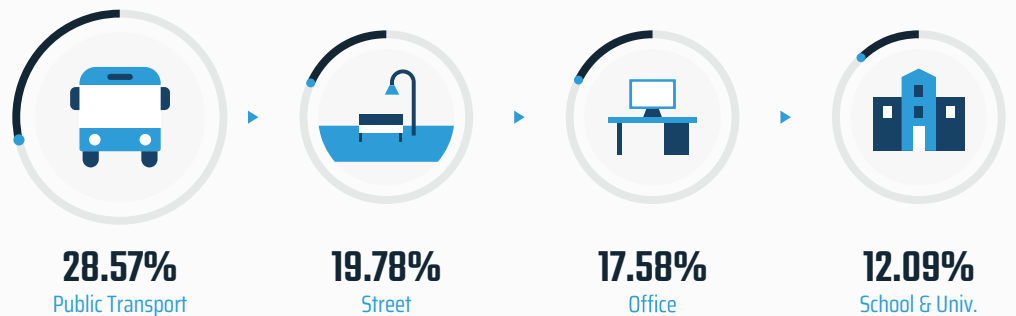
## Misplaced Locations

When it comes to Misplaced devices, almost as much as a third of all users simply forgot it at home.



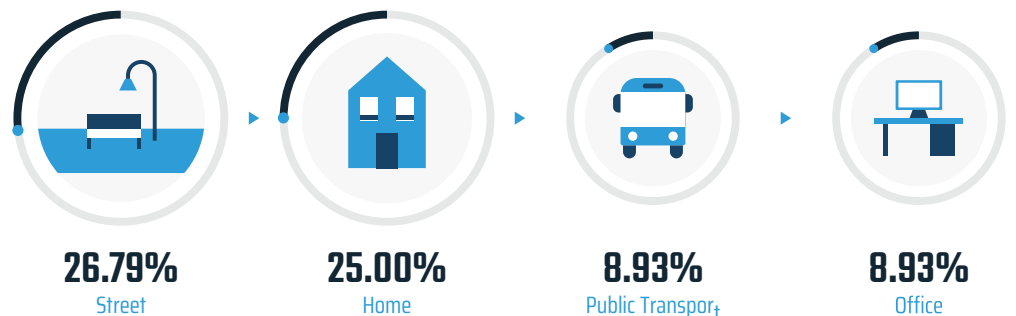
## Pickpocketed Locations

Whereas, when it comes to Pickpocketed devices, the most frequent scenario is the Public Transport. In this scenario, the Office location, what we consider a secure space, also represents a high percentage.



## Robbed Locations

Robbed device reports surprised us by identifying both the Street and Homes as the most frequent scenarios. This information is directly connected to the fact that recorded Home Invasions surpassed street Robberies, reflecting an interesting similarity in the likelihood of incidence. The same does occur with the Office space and the Public Transport, in spite of its much smaller scale of frequency.



\*Locations shown represent the top 4 places with the highest percentages/chances of having this event occur.



# Uncommon Scenarios

A fact that came out of analyzing the vast array of user stories is that when it comes to losing your phone, or laptop... anything can happen. We have received a great deal of amazing and interesting stories, here's a few uncommon scenarios we saw:



## Drunk User

Left it in the Fridge After a Night-out.



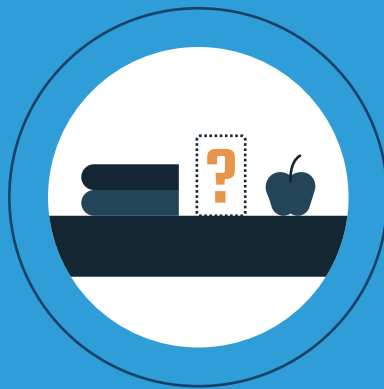
## Ex-employee

Faked his Death and Took Corporate Laptop.



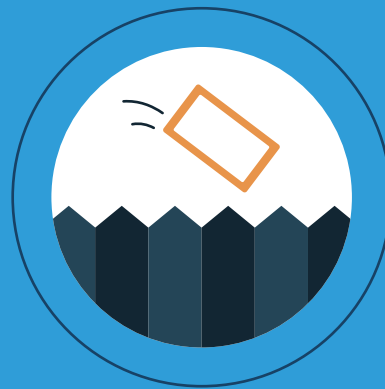
## Fell out

of This User's Pocket While Dirt-Biking.



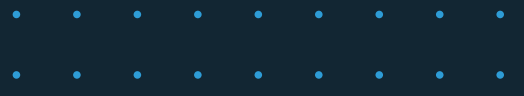
## Middle School Student

Stole the Teacher's Phone.



## Thrown Over the Fence

by an Angry Friend.



# 03.

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## THE GREATEST ENEMY

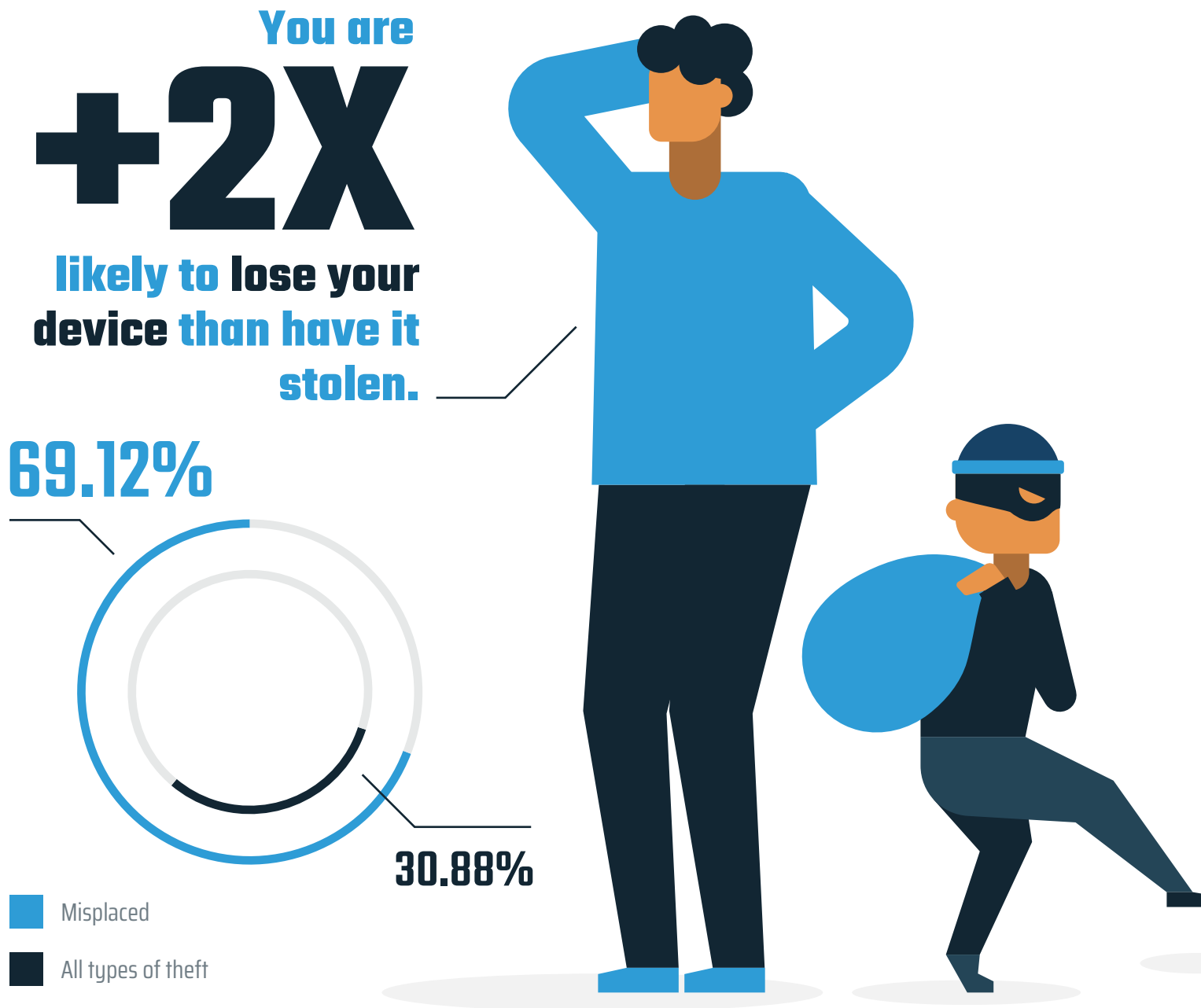
Thieves vs Ourselves



# Thieves vs Ourselves

When people and the media picture the greatest threats that your phone, gadgets, or possessions have to face, they usually depict the usual muggers and pickpockets as the main suspects.

In reality, our mobile device's greatest enemy is ourselves.



# Why? Stuff Just Happens



04.

**AFFECTED  
LOCATIONS**

Most Affected Locations

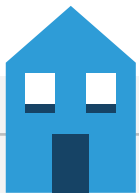
Comfort-based Insecurity

The Unusual Suspects



# Most Affected Locations

The scenarios in which you are most prone to lose your device show a clear tendency, with the top 5 results representing a combined 80.94% of all registered events. Furthermore, these five locations are places which users frequent for long periods of time and regularly, as part of their daily routines.



**27.99%**  
Home



**15.56%**  
Street



**14.48%**  
Office



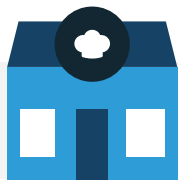
**12.06%**  
Public Transport



**10.86%**  
School & Univ.



**5.31%**  
Car



**3.62%**  
Restaurant



**2.90%**  
Mall



**2.17%**  
Supermarket



**1.81%**  
Gym



**1.33%**  
Airport



**1.21%**  
Bar



**0.48%**  
Store



**0.12%**  
Hotel

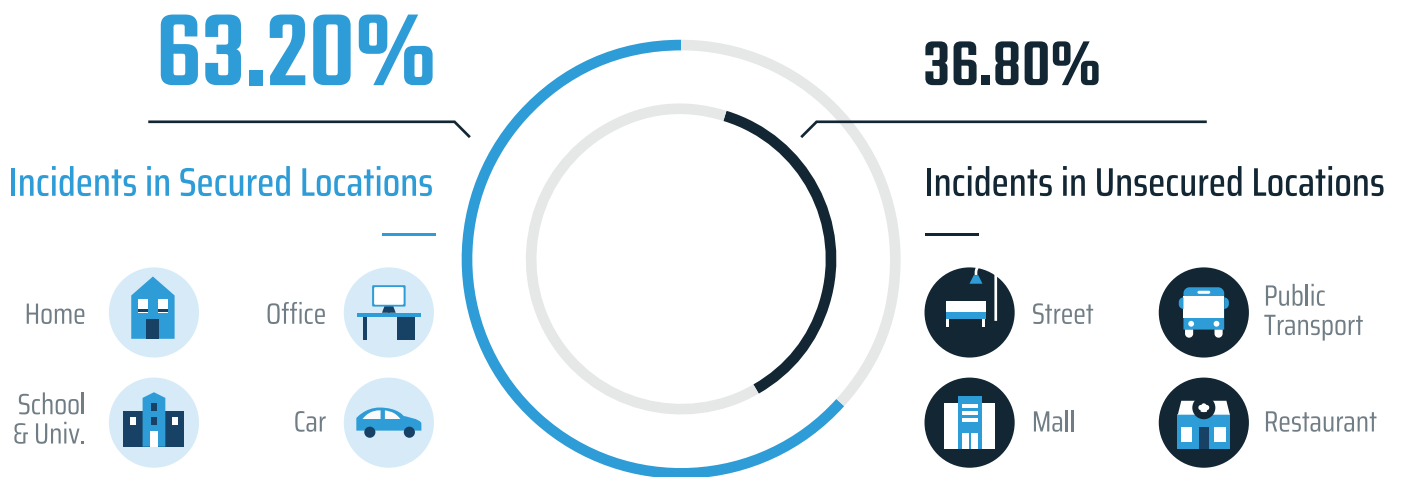


**0.12%**  
Other

# Comfort-based Insecurity

The next step for us was breaking down these locations into two groups: secured locations, or locations that are part of a person's comfort zone; and unsecured locations, or locations that aren't part of a person's comfort zone.

We gathered the top 4 locations of each group and compared their occurrence percentage. Our conclusion is that the majority of lost device events occur in places where the user is generally comfortable and doesn't expect insecurity.



# The Unusual Suspects

Comfort opens the door to the unexpected opportunists, the unsuspected suspects. These individuals take advantage of certain

scenarios that position them close to unprotected and valuable devices which aren't necessarily being monitored continuously.

We identified several repeating patterns:



**At School:** Students who pickpocket a teacher or another student's phone.



**At the Office:** Ex-employees who take laptops after being terminated.



**At Home:** Family members or apparent friends who take a device after visiting.



**At College:** Roommate or neighboring roommates who take and hide a laptop.

• • • • •  
• • • • •

# 05.

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## TARGETED DEVICES

Theft Statistics by Device

What Does it Mean to Lose Your Phone?





# Theft Statistics by Device

It is no news that mobiles are and continue to be a thief's main target. Their portability, size, growing costs, and quick-profit turnover continue to make them the easy and go-to target.



**73.05%**  
Mobiles



**24.22%**  
Laptops



**2.73%**  
Desktops

## What Does it Mean to Lose Your Phone?

Nowadays, mobile devices have become the central hub for all of an individual's personal data. Finances, businesses, pastimes, social lives, private lives, and identities can be accessed through these tiny gadgets.

If your phone falls into the wrong hands and doesn't have the proper protection, the thief can get more than a resell profit. The information that an open smartphone provides is enough for a bad actor to carry out identity theft, especially when the phone line continues to be open. When that is the case, thieves can even utilize a stolen phone's line to reset passwords on high-risk logins, such as your email.

### What Gets Lost With Your Phone.

Banking Apps  
Emails  
Social Accounts  
Contacts

Conversations  
Paired Credit Cards  
Business Information  
Phone number

### What Can You Do.

Use 2FA  
Password-lock Apps

Disable Mobile Line  
Avoid Automatic Logins



# 06.

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## CONCLUSION

Owners, the biggest threat

Comfort tackles your security

Theft is transversal to any location

Anything can happen, but we got your back!



## Owners, the biggest threat.

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Crime fluctuates and varies depending on a number of diverse factors. Things like the location and the context in which a person is present means that theft itself is an intermittent threat to your mobile devices. Conversely, mobile device owners will always be present as a threat, with their devices at hand and a two-out-of-three chance of being responsible for the device's loss.

## Theft is not bound to specific locations.

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We are accustomed to identifying cliché scenarios for events such as street theft, car break-ins, pickpocket, and home invasions. However, we have seen locations deemed safe, like Schools and Offices, grow in occurrence to the point they compare to less-secure locations, like the Street, or Public Transport.

## Comfort tackles your security.

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When a person moves through an area or place that is out of his or her comfort zone, he or she will be actively conscious of the surroundings and the threats that might be present.

On the other hand, when comfort is present and the person frequently visits or inhabits a location, he or she may lower their defenses and relax. This is why people are prone to losing their devices or giving opportunists a chance in places like the office, school, and their own homes.

## Anything can happen (but we'll help!)

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If our user's stories have taught us something this last year, it's that anything can happen at any given point. We've had users lose their devices for months, only to track them down with Prey and the police, arresting [a whole criminal organization](#). There was an MSP IT manager who caught a coworker who had stolen a laptop and [faked his death](#). And then, there's those who simply have bad luck, and [drop their phones in a cab](#).

# Whatever the case, we've got your back.

Be ready, get Prey.

## Involved from Prey

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Nicolás Poggi  
Juan Ortega

## Contributors

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Joan Geoghegan  
Mike Schultz

## About Prey

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Prey is a cross-platform anti-theft and management solution for laptops, tablets and phones used to protect over 8 million devices and their data, all around the world.

Prey started back in 2009 as a solid tracking technology that helped people keep track of their laptops and phones. Nowadays, crossing the 10-year mark, Prey has evolved into a multi-platform tracking technology that offers a variety of solutions for both people and businesses: tracking, device management, data protection, and anti-theft for laptops, tablets, and smartphones.

Prey for: [People](#) | [Businesses](#) | [Schools](#)

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