



ANNUAL BIKE THEFT REPORT

20

25



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



With over 58.2 million people riding bikes in the United States and Canada, cycling continues to gain popularity and the need to address bike theft has become increasingly crucial. In this report, we explore the many facets of bike theft and its effects on individuals and communities.

Using our own data and research from a database of over 1.3 million registered bikes along with publicly-available crime statistics, we've compiled a current report on the state of bike theft today and how to prevent it in the future.

ABOUT BIKE INDEX

Our Story

Bike Index was founded in 2013 by Seth Herr and Bryan Hance, two passionate cyclists who recognized the pressing need to combat the widespread issue of bike theft. Over the past decade, Bike Index has transformed into the largest bike registration in the U.S.

Through relentless efforts, innovative solutions, and a deep commitment to the cycling community, Bike Index's success is a testament to the power of perseverance and belief that every stolen bike deserves a chance to be reunited with its rightful owner.

Our Mission

Bike Index strives to create a safer cycling environment by providing a comprehensive platform for bike registration, facilitating the recovery of stolen bicycles, and fostering a strong community dedicated to combating bike theft.

Through our innovative technologies and collaborative partnerships, we aim to disrupt the cycle of bike fencing and make it increasingly difficult for thieves to profit from stolen bikes.



BIKE INDEX'S 2024 STATS

18,942

118,942 Bikes were reported stolen in 2024 in the Bike Index bike registry.

+15%

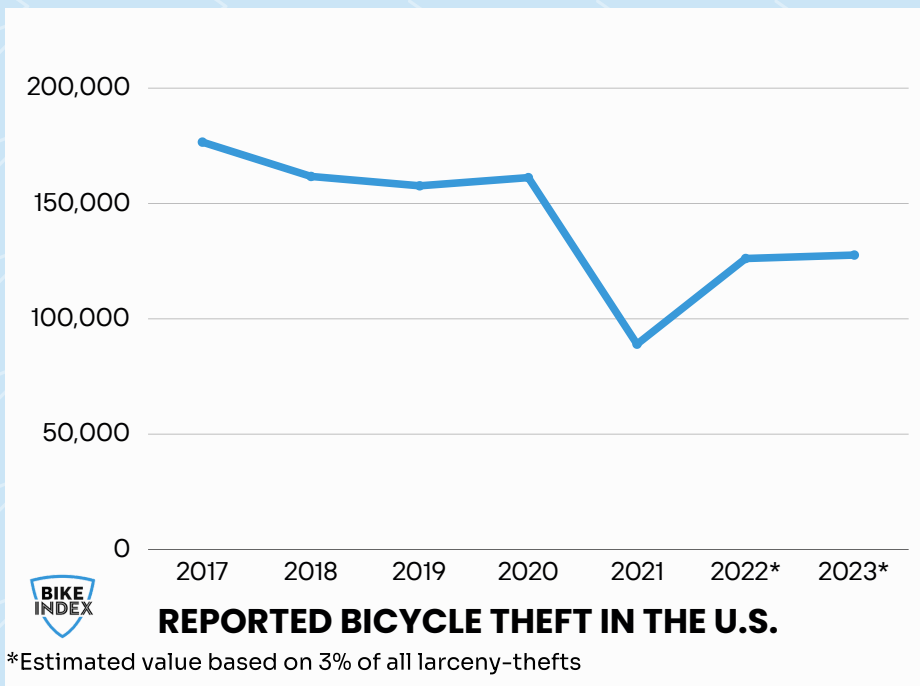
15% more bikes were reported stolen in 2024 than in 2023.

126

126 new partner organizations like university campuses, retailers, municipalities, and law enforcement agencies joined Bike Index totaling 1,725 total partners.

1.3M

In 2024, 186,409 new bicycles were added to the Bike Index registry, expanding the total number of registered bikes to over 1.3 million.



REPORTED BICYCLE THEFT IN THE U.S.

In 2023, an estimated **127,646 bicycles** (3% of all larceny-thefts reported to the FBI) were stolen. This number shows a slight increase from 2022's count of 126,153 reported stolen bicycles.

However, as you'll learn in this report, the true figure is likely much higher.

[Download the Chart](#)

BIKE THEFT AT-A-GLANCE

According to the most recent FBI crime statistics, bike theft overall appears to be steadily decreasing since the beginning of the decade. However, these statistics are incomplete, as nearly 37% fewer law enforcement agencies have been reporting their local crime statistics to the FBI since 2021, casting doubt on the accuracy of these figures.

The question remains: Has bike theft really decreased? In our own data analysis at Bike Index, we observed a **15% increase in reported stolen bicycles in 2024**.

With notorious underreporting of stolen bicycles and an incomplete picture from national crime statistics, it seems likely that this increase is universal.

Anecdotal evidence from our recovery efforts also suggests a more complex picture. We've witnessed an increase in smash-and-grab retailer thefts and e-bike thefts, as well as stumbled upon some intricate crime theft rings in our recovery efforts.

The problem of underreporting remains a significant challenge in accurately assessing the true scope of bike theft. With many incidents going unreported, we likely will never know the exact number of bikes stolen each year. Nevertheless, at Bike Index, our mission is unwavering—to eliminate bike theft altogether by dismantling the black market of bicycles through nationwide registration, vigorous recovery initiatives, and strong community partnerships.

While the reported statistics may indicate a decline, the reality on the ground suggests that bike theft remains a persistent issue, taking on new forms and evolving tactics.

Bike Index remains vigilant, adapting our strategies to counter emerging theft trends and leveraging our extensive network to track down and recover stolen bicycles.



15% increase in reported stolen bicycles to Bike Index in 2024.

+15%

MEASURING BIKE THEFT

Getting a complete picture of bicycle theft is difficult with the current measures in place. To create the most comprehensive data, we incorporate national crime statistics (which are notoriously underreported and incomplete) along with the bike theft trends we find in our own data and research. Here are some of the takeaways:

An estimated 40%+ of bike thefts are not reported to police.

As the leading national registry for bikes, Bike Index observed that of the 11,504 bike reported stolen in 2019, only 75% of them had an associated police report number. Taking into account that Bike Index users only represent a segment of bicycle owners, the number of unreported bicycle thefts is likely much higher with most estimates lying between 40–75%.

In a more recent research survey done in partnership with UCSB and SPAR Labs, only **37% of bike theft victims reported the theft to police.**

National crime statistic reporting dropped by nearly 37% in 2021.

The FBI gathers national crime statistics from thousands of local law enforcement agencies across the nation. When a new system of crime reporting was introduced in 2021, 36.8% fewer law enforcement agencies participated (11,531 agencies in 2020 to 7,287 agencies in 2021).

Concurrently, the total number of reported larceny-thefts (and bicycle thefts) significantly decreased. At this time, there is no nationwide report for reported bike thefts available.

MEASURING BIKE THEFT

In 2024, The Institute of Transportation Studies at University of California Davis, The Department of Geography at University of California Santa Barbara, and Bike Index conducted a survey in partnership with YouGov to produce an academic study investigating the true number of bicycles stolen annually in the U.S., the monetary cost of bike theft, and how bike theft rates vary by demographic.

The newly published findings (January 2025) revealed the following:

2.4m

2,376,578 adult bicycles are stolen annually in the U.S.

2.5x

Bicycles are 2.5x more likely to be stolen than a car.

59%

59% of bike thefts occurred in residential areas.

\$1.4b

The total annual value of stolen bicycles in the U.S. is \$1,438,542,487.

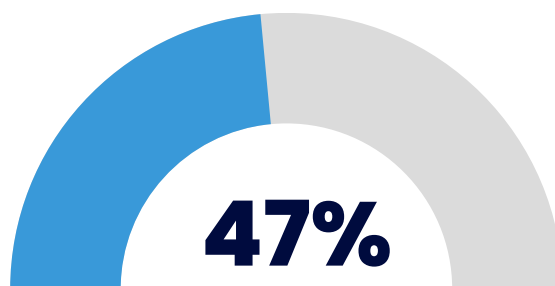
THE IMPACT OF BIKE THEFT

OUR RESEARCH

In 2017, we conducted a survey of bike theft victims who had registered a stolen bike at Bike Index to gain a greater understanding of the effect of bike theft on victims. The results revealed a significant impact on the daily life of bike theft victims, with lasting emotional, economical, and mobility implications.

Mobility

47% of participants indicated that the theft of their bike had impacted their ability to get to and from work.



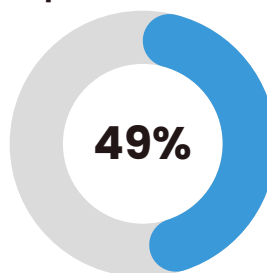
Bike thefts impact the victim's ability to commute to work

The Emotional Cost of Bike Theft

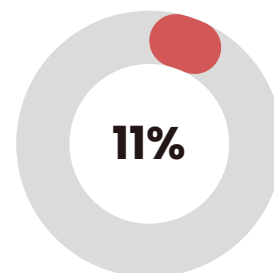
At Bike Index, we receive a large quantity of anecdotal data from the thousands of bikes we've recovered. Victims share with us the **grief of losing a bike** they've had for several years, the **anxiety** of running or walking for transportation (and the additional safety concerns that arise with that), and the **cherished memories** they've shared with their stolen bike. Oftentimes, the emotional cost of bike theft outweighs the bike's replacement value.

Replacing a Stolen Bike

>1 Month to Replace



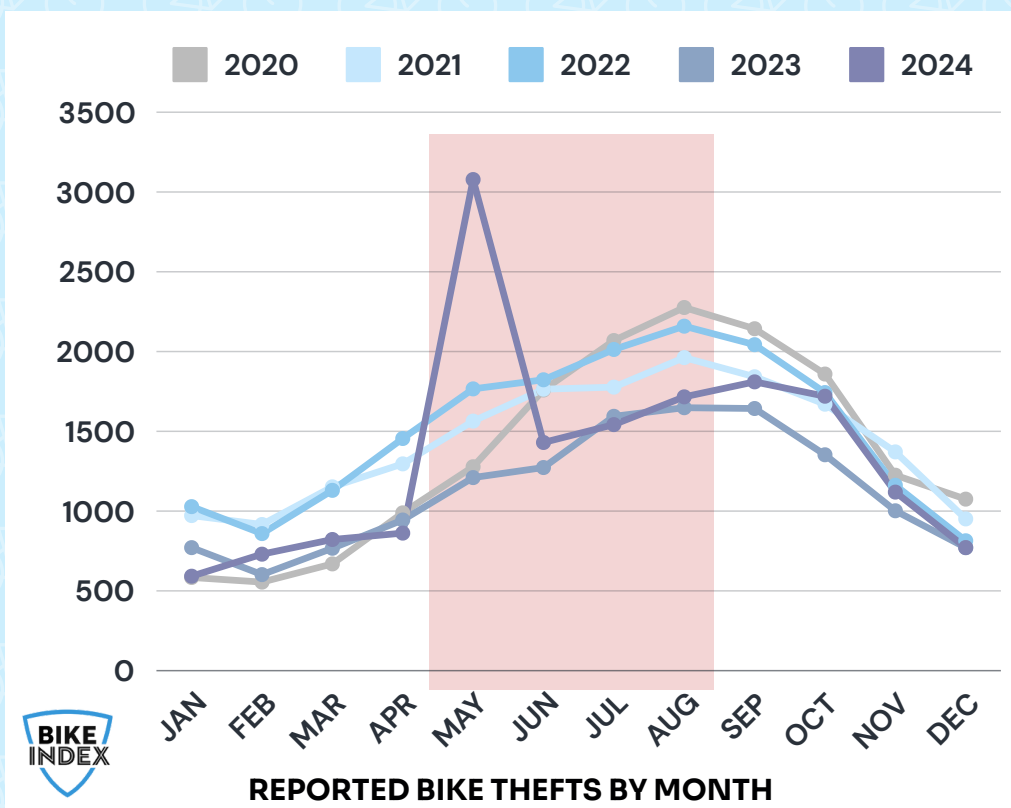
No Replacement



Nearly half (49%) of bike theft victims indicated that it would take longer than one month to replace their stolen bike, while 11% indicated that they weren't buying a replacement bike at all.

TRENDS IN BIKE THEFT

Bicycle theft consistently follows a seasonal pattern driven by environmental and behavioral factors, with summer months presenting a significantly elevated risk for cyclists. The following data illuminates the temporal trends of bicycle theft, highlighting critical periods of increased vulnerability for bike owners.



REPORTED BIKE THEFTS BY MONTH

Warmer weather = more theft.

Representing the last five years, this chart reveals a clear correlation between rising temperatures and increased bicycle theft.

[Download the Chart](#)

MAY-SEP

Peak bicycle theft season consistently runs from May through September each year.

3,048

Bicycles reported stolen in May 2024—the highest volume per month in 2024.

AUG

In the past five years, more bicycles have been stolen in August than in any other month.

WHERE BIKES ARE STOLEN

Bicycle theft is not a random occurrence, but a calculated crime that targets specific environments where bikes are left vulnerable. Bike Index gains significant insight directly from user reports, revealing a compelling narrative: **bikes are often stolen from locations owners consider secure** like parking facilities and home garages. We strongly encourage bike owners to enforce additional security measures to protect their bicycles.

PARKING FACILITIES

Parking facilities represent a critical weak point in bicycle security. Apartment complex garages, parking structures, and shared parking areas often lack robust security measures, creating an ideal environment for opportunistic thieves. These spaces typically offer multiple entry points and minimal surveillance, making them prime targets for bike theft.

Our recommendation: Don't leave your bike in "bicycle parking" rooms, if possible. If you must use the building's parking, double the number of locks you are using, lock your bike to something solid that cannot be removed by thieves, and try to get your building to install better security mechanisms.

COMMON LOCATIONS OF BICYCLE THEFT



Parking Facilities



Home Garages



Sidewalks/Bike Racks

45% Larceny-thefts occur at home or a parking facility.

*FBI 2023 CRIME DATA

45%

WHERE BIKES ARE STOLEN

HOME GARAGES & BASEMENTS

Residential areas, particularly home garages and basements, present another major vulnerability. Thieves recognize that home garages often have compromised security mechanisms—weak locks, unsecured entry points, and limited visibility create an attractive target. Bicycle owners frequently underestimate the ease with which criminals can access these seemingly private spaces, leaving their valuable bikes exposed to quick and relatively undetected theft.

Our recommendation: Disable your garage door release—thieves commonly use your emergency release pull cords to break into garages with ease. Add security cameras and motion detectors to your home garage. We recommend getting a few: a couple cameras (one very visible and another hidden one at head height) and a simple motion detector near any entry points to scare off the casual burglar with a loud alarm and also alert your phone. Finally, don't forget to lock your bike to something—yes, even in your garage. Be sure to lock your bike to something sturdy, thick and impossible to cut through, and/or use an anchor bolt to ensure your bike is securely locked to a floor bolt and not going anywhere.

SIDEWALKS & BIKE RACKS

Public spaces such as sidewalks and bike racks compound the security challenge. While these areas are designed to provide convenient bicycle parking, they simultaneously offer thieves a low-risk opportunity for theft. Bike racks in high-traffic areas, despite their apparent visibility, often lack meaningful deterrence against determined criminals who can quickly compromise standard locks and remove a bicycle with ease under the cover of crowd activity.

Our recommendation: Bring your bicycle with you whenever you can, especially for extended periods of time. When you do lock your bike, aim to have the hardest bike to steal on the rack: as a minimum, we recommend 2 heavy-duty U-locks, or a U-lock and one heavy duty cable (never use a cable lock as a primary means of locking a bike in a city). Tug on whatever you're locking your bike to to make sure it can't be easily removed. Signposts particularly, can be easily removed, and some are already unattached.

Learn more about protecting your bike on our website:

- [Register Your Bike](#)
- [How to Secure Your Bike](#)

2x Increase

Calgary doubles bike recovery
rate with Bike Index

\$1,000,000+

Edmonton Police Service estimates that Bike Index has helped
recover over \$1 million worth of stolen property since 2019.

Does Bike Registration Really Work?





THE EFFICACY OF BICYCLE REGISTRATION

Bike registration has consistently shown to significantly **improve recovery rates and reduce theft**. By making it simple for cyclists to register their bikes and report thefts, communities can create a more efficient system for recovering stolen bikes and deterring future crimes. The following success stories highlight how streamlined registration efforts supported by local partnerships and law enforcement can have a meaningful impact on **bike theft prevention and recovery**.

Edmonton Recovers \$1 Million in Stolen Bikes in 5 Years

Since introducing Bike Index in 2019, Edmonton has registered **146,000+ bikes**, helping the Edmonton Police Service recover over **\$1 million in stolen property**.

Police report a significant increase in recoveries, with **many stolen bikes returned within 24 hours**, while also noting a decline in thefts, partly due to Bike Index stickers acting as a deterrent.

The program's growth has been bolstered by partnerships with local bike shops, creating a strong community effort to combat bike theft.

"Since Bike Index has been implemented, the numbers are trending down and recoveries have gone way up."

[Read the Full Story on CBC >](#)

THE EFFICACY OF BICYCLE REGISTRATION

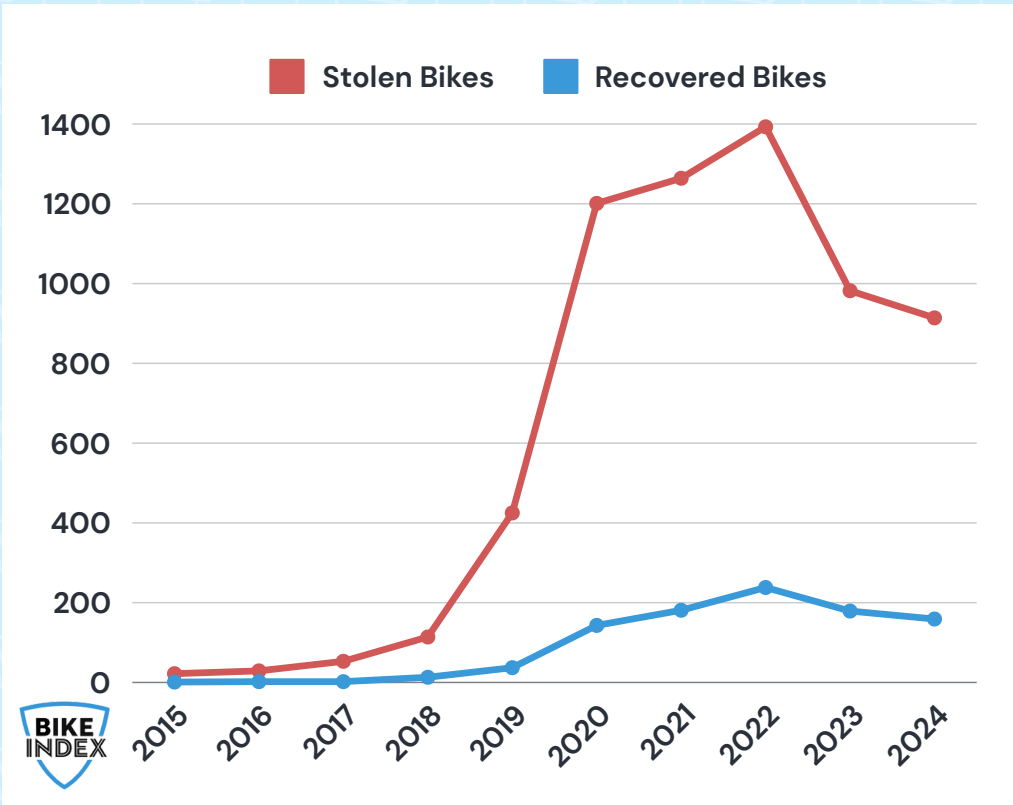


Calgary Doubles Bike Recovery Rate with Bike Index

In 2020, Calgary’s bike recovery rate increased from **12% to 21.5%** following the introduction of Bike Index.

By making registration easy and accessible, nearly **16,000 bikes** were **registered within a year**, leading to the recovery of 212 stolen bikes.

Calgary’s **recovery rates are over double** Bike Index’s typical recovery rate. This success is attributed to streamlined registration efforts, partnerships with local bike shops, and strong community support



STOLEN BIKE RECOVERIES IN CALGARY

The Impact of Bike Registration
This chart illustrates a clear increase in stolen bike recoveries in Calgary, with a notable spike following the introduction of Bike Index. We also see the decrease of bike theft overall after 3 years of registration implementation.

[Download the Chart](#)

HOW TO PROTECT BIKES FROM THEFT

Protecting your bike from theft requires a combination of proactive strategies to increase its security and make it less appealing to thieves. By taking these simple yet effective steps, you can significantly reduce the risk of theft and increase the chances of recovering your bike if it is stolen.

From Bike Index's experience in recovering thousands of stolen bikes in the last 11 years, we have consistently observed that these preventative measures—when implemented together—dramatically enhance bike security and recovery outcomes. Our data shows that bikes with proper registration, secure locking practices, and community involvement are far less likely to be stolen and more likely to be returned to their rightful owners.



Register your bike.

Registering your bike allows law enforcement to quickly identify and return your bike if it is stolen, making it harder for thieves to sell or dispose of it.



Properly secure your bike.

Always use a high-quality U-lock to secure both the frame and the wheels to an immovable object to make it more difficult for thieves to steal your bike.



Get your community involved.

Engage with local bike shops and community groups that promote bike registration and anti-theft initiatives to create a network of vigilance and support for bike owners.

Get a custom bike theft report.

To gain deeper insights into how bike theft is affecting your community, Bike Index offers custom bike theft reports with valuable data on stolen bicycles, recovery rates, and registrations in your region or community.

Whether you're a law enforcement agency, local government, community organization, or member of the press, a custom report can be a powerful tool to inform and guide efforts to reduce bike theft in your area.

Contact Bike Index today to request your personalized bike theft report and take the first step toward creating a safer, more secure cycling environment.

press@bikeindex.org

About Bike Index

Bike Index is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded in 2013 by Seth Herr and Bryan Hance to make bike registration simple in order to combat bike theft. The online registry helps cyclists register their bikes, report them as stolen, and increases the chance that stolen bikes are recovered and returned to their owners.

Bike Index partners with municipalities, local law enforcement agencies, bike shops, community organizations, universities and other groups to build a globally accessible database of bikes with over 1.3 million bikes in the international registry.

Bike Index
www.bikeindex.org

