



SAFETY & SECURITY

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VAN TOOL STORAGE: PROTECTING YOUR LIVELIHOOD IN AN AGE OF TOOL THEFT



Ask just about anyone on the tools, and they'll have a story – if not their own. Tool theft from vans is a modern epidemic in the UK, hitting tradespeople and everybody needs in their working life.

Let's dig into the reality of van tool theft, the impact it can have, and – most importantly – how you can protect your tools. If you want your tools and your van safe, you'll want to read on.

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THEFT IN THE

- Up to 78% of UK tradespeople have had their tools stolen at least once, and 58% say it's a daily concern.
- The stats don't let up: in 2024, over 25,500 tool thefts were officially recorded, with nearly half involving tools stolen from vans. London, West Yorkshire, and Essex are reported as the highest-risk regions for van crime.
- The cost to our economy and individuals is enormous. It's estimated that tool theft costs UK tradespeople £2.8 billion a year, with the average cost per incident £4,470 – and nearly one in five suffer losses of more than £5,000.
- The average value of equipment stolen per van was over £1,700 in the last year, with 1 in 5 (19%) UK van drivers falling victim.
- Most stolen tools are never seen again. A shocking 94% of tools stolen are never recovered.





THE TRUE COST FOR TRADESPEOPLE

Beyond the direct financial hit, losing your tools can mean missed work, disappointed clients, cancelled jobs, and higher insurance premiums. According to a recent survey, **57% of tool theft victims are forced to take unplanned downtime**. And for self-employed trades, time off work can wipe out a week or more's earnings.

Insurance can help, but premiums are rising, excesses are high, and very few policies cover all equipment without significant proof and paperwork. No wonder trust in law enforcement is low too, with 87% of tradespeople feeling the police aren't equipped to pursue these crimes effectively.

WHY VANS ARE PRIME TARGETS

Vans are thieves' favourites, and for a simple reason: **they know valuable kit is inside**. While some thefts happen on jobs or outside homes, the overwhelming majority now occur from parked vans – particularly overnight.

Modern thieves are quick, well-equipped, and opportunistic. Sometimes, they'll steal an entire van just to get to the cargo, using electronic hacking and lock-picking gadgets. Others target visible tool boxes or unlocked vehicles. Once tools are gone, they're swiftly resold online or at car boot sales.

TOOL THEFT AFFECTS US ALL

It's not just the financial pain. Tool theft has been cited as contributing to rising stress, sleeplessness, and even mental health issues among UK tradespeople. The near-daily threat also deters people from joining the industry at a time when skilled trades are desperately needed.

BEATING THE THIEVES: VAN TOOL SECURITY SOLUTIONS

Nobody wants to live in fear, but tool security is something you can take control of. And, thankfully, van tool storage has come a long way. Here's how to protect your investment:

1. UPGRADE YOUR STORAGE WITH SECURITY BOXES

If you're serious about safeguarding your kit, **investing in a tough, professionally-designed van tool security box is essential**. These aren't your cheap tin toolboxes – think thick-gauge steel, reinforced anti-pry lids, and tamper-proof locking systems.

For example, the range at HSE Store features leading brands like Van Vault and Armorgard, offering:

- Heavy-duty security boxes (like the Van Vault XL or Van Vault Mobi) with multiple locking points, anti-pick/disc locks, and anti-corrosion coatings.
- Drawer systems bolted to floors for added security and easy access to tools on busy days.
- Armorgard TuffBank boxes for high-capacity needs, made with tamper-proof locks and corrosion-resistant materials.
- Modular setups – mix and match boxes and drawers to fit your van and trade.

These modern security units are independently tested and police-recommended (like the Sold Secure and Secured By Design schemes) and can be bolted down so thieves can't just lift and go.

2. LAYER UP YOUR SECURITY

No one solution is perfect – combine:

- Upgraded locks and deadlocks for all van doors.
- Visible deterrents (e.g., window grilles, security signs).
- GPS tracking for tools and vehicles.
- Tool marking and asset tagging for easier recovery.
- Park up with doors against a wall or another van at night.

3. USE SMART HABITS

- Never leave tools in your van overnight if possible.
- Always park in well-lit, secure places – preferably with CCTV.
- Catalogue your tools, keep receipts and serial numbers, and photograph expensive kit.

A CLOSER LOOK AT SECURE TOOL BOXES

Our range makes it easy to beef up your van's toolkit defences:

- **Van Vault XL and Mobi boxes:** Rugged, stand-alone storage; suitable for everything from drills to specialist kit. With anti-pick locks, reinforced lids, and portability for job-to-job security.
- **Van Vault Drawer Units:** Bolt these under shelves for quick access but serious security.
- **Armorgard TuffBank:** Extra-durable and tamper-proof, ideal for bigger investments.
- **Features to look for:** multi-point locking, 2mm+ steel construction, bolt-down kits, gas struts for easy access, and corrosion-proof finishes.

Layering small portable boxes (for hand tools) and fixed, bolted main storage gives you both flexibility and strength.

WHAT ABOUT INSURANCE AND THE LAW?

Even with robust security, tool insurance should be a last line of defence. Always check your policy for exclusions and overnight cover.

Frustratingly, only 1% of stolen tools are ever recovered and returned, partly because current laws and police resources aren't seen as enough of a deterrent. There are now industry calls for tougher sentencing and stricter controls on selling second-hand tools.

FINAL WORDS

Nobody wants to be caught out. It's gutting to see hard-earned tools walk away – but you can swing the odds in your favour. **Prioritise secure van tool storage, layer up your defences, and keep smart with your habits.** At the end of the day, it's about protecting your business, your reputation, and your peace of mind.

TOP 10 FAQs ABOUT VAN TOOL STORAGE AND SECURITY

– How common is tool theft from vans in the UK?

Extremely common – up to 78% of tradespeople have suffered tool theft, and almost half of all tool thefts now happen from vans.

+ Do secure tool boxes really stop thieves?

+ What types of van storage solutions are available?

+ Should I remove tools from my van overnight?

+ What security features should I look for in a van tool box?

+ Are van tool security boxes insurance-approved?

+ Can tradespeople claim for tool theft on insurance?

+ Does tool theft affect business downtime?

+ Are police doing anything about tool theft?

+ Where can I buy secure van tool storage?

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