

Criminal Damage

Self-help booklet

What is Criminal Damage?

Criminal damage refers to both deliberate and accidental harm done to your home, property, or vehicle by someone else. The damage inflicted does not need to be lasting or permanent.

Offences of criminal damage can vary in seriousness, from complete destruction to smaller incidents that may cost less to repair. However, experiencing a minor incident can still be distressing and worrying and we can offer support if you need it.

Criminal damage comes in various forms, including arson, vandalism, and threats to destroy or harm property. These acts can be driven by different motives, such as:

- Aggravated criminal damage, where the intent is to put someone's life at risk, or racially
- Religiously aggravated criminal damage, where the offense is fueled by hostility or prejudice based on race or religion.

What can you do?

Contact your insurance company as soon as possible to file an insurance claim if the damage affects your home, vehicle or belongings. Photos and police reports may be required as part of the claims process so make sure you document the damage by taking photos and videos.

Consider safety measures, If the criminal damage was targeted or part of an ongoing issue, it might be helpful to review your safety. This could include installing security cameras, changing locks or getting window/door alarms.

Consider legal support, depending on the severity of the damage, you may want to access legal advice.

Seek support: experiencing criminal damage can be distressing. It can be helpful to reach out to victim support organisations, such as NSVCS.

Access Restorative Justice: Restorative justice is a voluntary process which offers you the opportunity to potentially communicate with the offender. You may be able to talk about the incident, the harm caused and ask any questions that you may have. To access Restorative Justice, speak to NSVCS.



What can NSVCS do?

Through our victim services, we are here to support anyone who has been affected by criminal damage. Our person-centred approach aims to empower and build resilience; we provide the necessary tools to navigate your recovery journey and move forward from the impact of crime. Support offered by our victims' services is free, independent and confidential, and available to victims and witnesses regardless of whether the crime has been reported or not.

We can help in the following ways:

- Emotional support
- Advocacy
- Support through criminal justice processing
- Signposting and onward referrals
- Access to Restorative Justice
- Practical Support including crime prevention and safety advice



Useful organisations

Crown Prosecution Service: legal guidance on criminal damage.

Police UK website: explains how to report a crime

Crimestoppers: An independent charity that allows victims and witnesses to report crimes, including criminal damage, anonymously. They also provide information on preventing further incidents.

Shelter: Shelter offers advice and support, including if someone's home has been damaged or they feel unsafe in their current accommodation.

Reporting

You can also report to the police:

- In an emergency always call 999.
- In a non-emergency call 101
- Report online - [Contact us | Police.uk](#)
- Visit a local police station
- To report a crime anonymously, contact Crimestoppers at 0800 555 111, or visit [Independent UK charity taking crime information anonymously | Crimestoppers](#)

