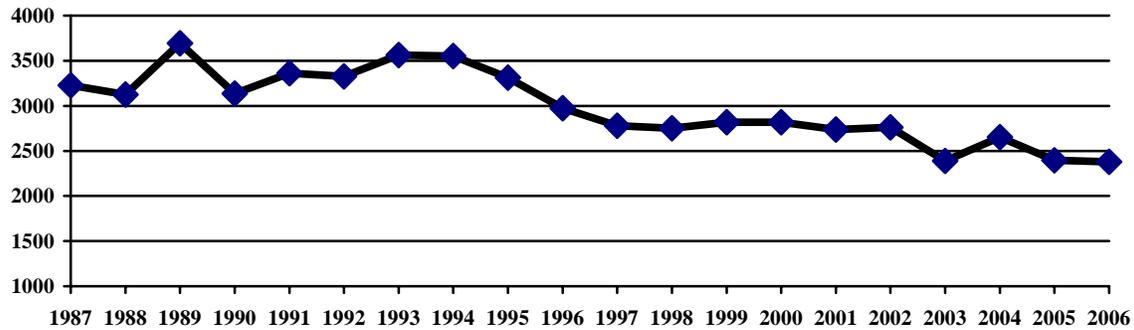


L A R C E N Y

Larceny is the unlawful taking, carrying, leading, or riding away of property from the possession of another. It includes crimes such as shoplifting, pocket picking, thefts from motor vehicles, thefts of auto parts and accessories, horse thefts, and bicycle thefts, in which no use of force, violence, fraud, or trespass occurs. In the Uniform Crime Reporting Program, this crime category does not include embezzlement, “con” games, forgery, or worthless checks. Motor vehicle theft is also excluded from this category, as it is a separate crime index offense.

**Twenty Year Review:
Larceny in Cambridge, 1987-2006**



2,396 reported in 2005 • 2,377 reported in 2006

Larceny is the most common of the Part One crimes, accounting for just over 63% of the serious crime total. Larceny often produces the most patterns. The three categories that produced some of the highest numbers – larcenies from motor vehicles, buildings, and persons – are often fueled by changes in technology. As electronics such as laptops, GPS navigation systems, and portable music players evolve, they become easier to steal, conceal, and ultimately sell. Despite the high number of incidents reported, it remains unclear how accurately this number reflects the actual number of larcenies committed. Larceny remains one of the most underreported crimes. Note that the larceny total only includes incidents reported to the Cambridge Police.

Larceny is further broken down into the nine categories listed in the table below. As can be seen from the total number above, there was an overall decrease in larcenies this year in comparison to 2005. However, increases were reported in some of the individual categories: larceny from motor vehicles, of services, from residences, and miscellaneous/unclassifiable larcenies.

Categorization	2005	2006	% Change
Larcenies from Buildings	539	386	-28%
Larcenies from MV	615	754	+23%
Larcenies of Bicycles	241	204	-15%
Larcenies from Persons	343	337	-2%
Shoplifting	403	342	-15%
Larcenies of Services	19	21	+11%
Larcenies from Residences	175	246	+41%
Larcenies of License Plates	42	30	-29%
Other (Unclassifiable) Larcenies	19	57	+200

LARCENY FROM BUILDINGS

Larcenies from Buildings are non-burglary thefts from commercial establishments. "Non-burglary" means that either the offender had a specific right to be on the premises, or that the building was open to the general public, and that no force was used to gain entry to the building where the theft was committed.

GEOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN BY BUSINESS DISTRICT		
Area	2005	2006
Galleria/East Cambridge	86	76
Kendall Square/MIT	37	28
Inman Square	30	29
Central Square	87	70
Cambridgeport/Riverside	26	14
Bay Square/Upper Broadway	47	26
Harvard Square	78	43
1500-1900 Mass. Ave.	52	25
Porter Square	36	35
Alewife/West Cambridge	60	40

Larcenies from buildings targeting construction sites doubled in 2006 from the previous year. Locations in East Cambridge accounted for 63% of the 27 sites. Theft of copper materials was the main target item in these larcenies. To read more about theft of copper materials, please see the "Hot" Theft Targets section.

TOP 5 HOT SPOTS OF 2006

1. Cambridgeside Galleria Mall
100 Cambridgeside Place - 37 incidents
2. Cambridge Rindge and Latin School
459 Broadway - 13 incidents
3. Bally's Health Club
1815 Massachusetts Avenue - 12 incidents
4. Boston Sports Club
625 Massachusetts Avenue - 11 incidents
5. YMCA
820 Massachusetts Avenue - 6 Incidents
Mount Auburn Hospital
330 Mount Auburn St. - 6 Incidents

There were 386 larcenies from buildings reported this year. This total represents a 28% decrease from the previous year and is 24% lower than the five-year average of 507 incidents annually.

The following are the most common larceny from building scenarios:

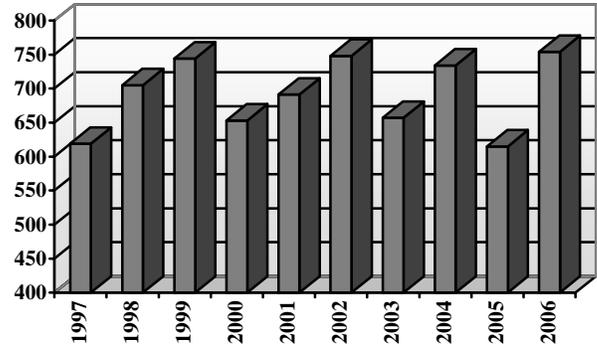
1. Someone leaves his or her belongings unattended for a short time, such as leaving a coat in a public coat closet, and then comes back to find the property missing. In 15% of the incidents in 2006, property was stolen in this manner.
2. An employee of a commercial establishment leaves his or her personal property on a store counter or in a "back room" where he or she thinks it will be safe. Later, the employee notices that the property is missing. Approximately 13% of incidents reported occurred in this manner.
3. A thief walks into an office building during open business hours, posing as a delivery person or claiming to be looking for an employee that does not exist. The thief moves unnoticed into an empty office and takes personal or company property. Laptops were the favorite target this year. This scenario accounted for 14% of the total reported larcenies from buildings.
4. A thief pries open a locker at a fitness club, commonly targeting credit cards for unauthorized use. In 2006, 10% of larceny from building incidents occurred in this manner.
5. A thief waits for or finds the opportunity to steal property left unattended in classrooms or left unlocked on school desks or lockers. This scenario accounted for 10% of the total reported.
6. An employee finds him or herself in a situation where the opportunity arises to steal from another employee or from a depository such as a cash register at his or her place of employment and the employee cannot resist. This scenario accounted for nearly 9% of the total reported.

LARCENY FROM MOTOR VEHICLES

Larcenies from Motor Vehicles involve an offender either breaking into a car and stealing valuables from within or stealing an exterior accessory (such as tires and hubcaps) from an automobile.

Larcenies from motor vehicles reached a significant high in 2006 at 754 incidents, translating to a 23% increase from the previous year. This year's high is also the decade's high and is 52 reports above the five-year average of 702 annual incidents. The Inman/Harrington neighborhood incurred the greatest increase in car breaks, doubling in number. The only neighborhoods to report decreases were Cambridgeport, which experienced a decline of 25%, followed by Strawberry Hill and West Cambridge, which experienced decreases of 19% and 17%, respectively.

Larceny from Motor Vehicles, 1997-2006



Neighborhood	2005	2006	% Change
East Cambridge	62	94	52%
MIT	16	24	50%
Inman/Harrington	30	61	100%
Area 4	54	64	19%
Cambridgeport	89	67	-25%
Mid-Cambridge	65	85	31%
Riverside	43	43	No change
Agassiz	29	43	48%
Peabody	61	111	82%
West Cambridge	76	63	-17%
North Cambridge	53	64	21%
Cambridge Highlands	16	18	13%
Strawberry Hill	21	17	-19%

Hondas continued to be the most targeted car make for larcenies from motor vehicles. Nevertheless, unlike the popular entry via a broken window, Hondas are regularly entered by unknown means, incidents in which no damage can be detected to indicate a method of entry. The increase in larceny from motor vehicles can be attributed, in part, to two patterns that have risen from the past years. The two recurrent patterns in larceny from motor vehicle, which were experienced throughout the city, were thefts of GPS navigation systems and a few series of stereo thefts. The trend of headlight thefts decreased dramatically this year in comparison to 2005 incidents.

IN FOCUS: GPS NAVIGATION SYSTEM THEFTS

The hottest trend in larceny from motor vehicle in Cambridge this year was by far the theft of Global Positioning System (GPS) navigation systems. Global Positioning uses satellites to pinpoint the user's location, locate the position of the technology (i.e. navigation system in a vehicle or cellular phone), and report that to the user. GPS systems in vehicles are used to direct a driver from one location to another, providing the driver with instructions of where to make necessary turns to arrive at a given destination. GPS navigation systems have become a more popular option that comes installed in many new vehicle models. Like any other new technology that becomes popular, the advancements in GPS technology have also made this an affordable feature for owners of older models to add to their vehicles.



Nearly 12% of all reported car breaks in 2006 (90 incidents) involved the theft of GPS systems. Theft of these systems contributed to the drive upward in larcenies this year. This is a significant increase over 2005 when 21 incidents of GPS system thefts were reported, and an even greater increase from 2004 when only 4 incidents were reported. This trend began during the month of December 2005 and continued to increase enormously into the new year of 2006. A similarity in a majority of the incidents was the method of entry, which usually involved breaking windows. Nearly all the thefts took place in parking garages/lots. The most common time frame was during the day from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. when most vehicle owners were at work away from their cars. There was no pattern to the vehicle models of the cars targeted. Nearly one-fourth of the GPS thefts were in East Cambridge, particularly at the Cambridgeside Galleria parking garage. Parking lots in Kendall Square, Science Park, and Cambridge Center were also targeted. The State Police arrested a major suspect in these larcenies in early February. This offender admitted to stealing 5 GPS systems from the Museum of Science parking garage, half a dozen from the Galleria, 10 to 12 from Kendall Square, and an unknown number from other locations in Boston. Despite this arrest, theft of GPS systems continued throughout the year and will remain a trend to watch as we enter 2007.

IN FOCUS: STEREO SYSTEMS

Approximately 14% of all reported larcenies from motor vehicles involved the theft or attempted theft of car stereo systems from dashboards. This represents a slight decrease from the 119 stereo thefts and attempts that were reported in 2005. Of the 104 incidents in 2006, roughly 27% were stereo thefts from Hondas. This trend of stereo thefts from motor vehicles emerges every year as a citywide and regional problem. Key observations concerning these thefts include:

- Incidents were highest in the month of March, with a concentration in Peabody on weekdays.
- Nearly one-fourth of stereo theft incidents occurred in the Peabody neighborhood.



The number of thefts of these systems was driven by sporadic patterns around the city targeting stereos. A major pattern developed over the summer months with the hot spots being around Richdale Ave. and Humboldt Street. These larcenies were occurring from 3:00 a.m. – 5:00 a.m. and early in the week on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays. After September, no geographic or temporal patterns were identified.

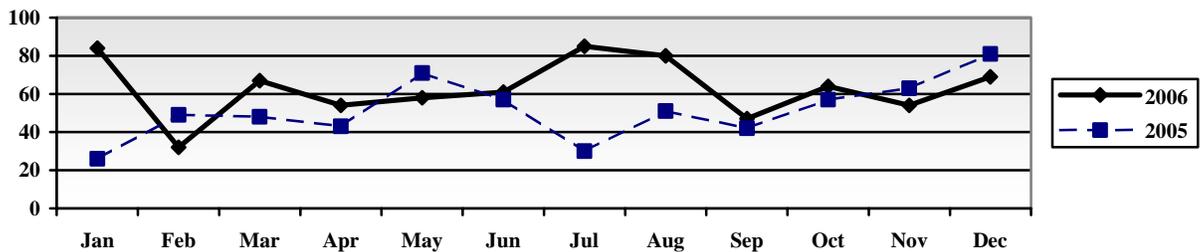
Top Three Methods of Entry

1. The most common method of entry into motor vehicles in 2006 was by breaking one or more windows of the vehicle. This method was reported in half of the incidents.
2. The second most common method of entry into motor vehicles was by unknown means. That is, there were no signs of forced entry into the vehicle. This method was reported in 17% of reported incidents.
3. The third most common larceny from motor vehicle MO was through an unlocked door, which occurred in 11% of the incidents.

Top Ten Stolen Items of 2006

1. Car Stereos/CD player – 104 reported stolen
2. GPS Navigation System – 90 reported stolen
3. Purse/Bag – 75 reported stolen
4. Cellular Telephone – 69 reported stolen
5. iPod – 59 reported stolen
6. Loose change – 40 reported stolen
7. Wallet – 37 reported stolen
8. Tires – 31 reported stolen
9. Laptop Computer – 29 reported stolen
10. Clothing – 22 reported stolen

Monthly Totals for Larceny from Motor Vehicles



HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

- Larcenies from motor vehicles have consistently averaged between 16-20% of the total serious crime index in Cambridge for over 20 years. This year's total hovers around this average, making up 20% of all larceny. Nationally, thefts from vehicles made up 20% of all crime reported by the Federal Bureau of Investigations.
- For the first five years of the 1980s, Cambridge averaged 1,050 larcenies from motor vehicles. This average increased to 1,175 per year between 1986 and 1990. From 1991 to 1995, incidents decreased to an average of 879 incidents per year. Between 1996 and 2000, incidents dropped significantly to an average of 684 per year, and from 2001 to 2006, the average number of larcenies from motor vehicles rose slightly to 700 incidents per year.
- During 1996, the Cambridge Police Department assigned high priority to the early intervention of larceny from motor vehicle patterns. Target areas were flooded with directed patrols to combat chronic problem areas where spatial and temporal trends had been identified. The result of these efforts was the lowest larceny from motor vehicle total in 16 years. Since 1996, larcenies from motor vehicles have remained relatively low compared to the pre-1996 figures.

LARCENY OF BICYCLES

Note: The Cambridge Police Department's bicycle theft statistics do not include thefts reported to the MIT or Harvard University Police Departments. These additional thefts could add several hundred to the theft total.

Between 1989 and 1994, bicycle theft exhibited a sharp ascent, soaring from an average of 270 per year in the 1980s to 584 in 1994. Since 1994, the crime has been steadily decreasing, with the exception of slight increases reported in 2000, 2004, and 2005. The overall decline reflects, perhaps, the increased publicity given to this crime, the greater availability of bicycle racks, and a crime-prevention conscious public.

After a steady three-year decline in larceny of bicycles, 2004 and 2005 marked an increase in incidents. This increase halted in 2006 when only 204 bikes were reported stolen, a decrease of 15% from 2005.

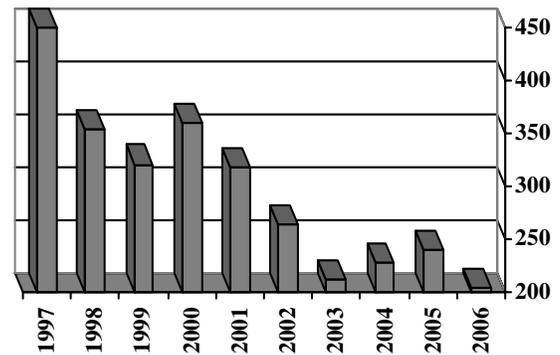
Not surprisingly, the majority of bicycle thefts occurred in the summer months of July and August, when bicycles typically pack the streets and sidewalks. However, the medium rates of incidents continued into the first months of fall,

possibly due to the abnormally warmer months experienced in 2006. Temporally, the only reportable pattern was that the majority of incidents took place during the afternoon hours, when victims were at work or classes, with no concentration on any day of the week.

Incidents were scattered throughout busy commercial areas, where visitors and employees commute on bikes. Larceny of bicycle activity during the year was mostly concentrated in Harvard and Central Squares. Specific areas of repeat incidents included the Cambridge Rindge and Latin School premises and the Cambridgeside Galleria.

NEIGHBORHOOD	2005	2006
East Cambridge	20	16
MIT	4	7
Inman/Harrington	20	12
Area 4	34	21
Cambridgeport	22	27
Mid-Cambridge	29	30
Riverside	27	18
Agassiz	7	8
Peabody	19	20
West Cambridge	36	12
North Cambridge	16	28
Cambridge Highlands	7	2
Strawberry Hill	0	3

Bicycle Larceny, 1997-2006



Locks present little difficulty to bicycle thieves, who often bring bolt cutters or pry bars with them. Fifty-six percent of all reported bicycle thefts involved a locked and unattended bicycle on the street, sidewalk, or rack. Unlocked bicycles that were on private property followed, making up 25% of reported incidents. These thefts occurred in apartment building hallways, or when bicycles were left in private yards. Fifteen percent of the larcenies were because the bicycle was left unlocked and unprotected.

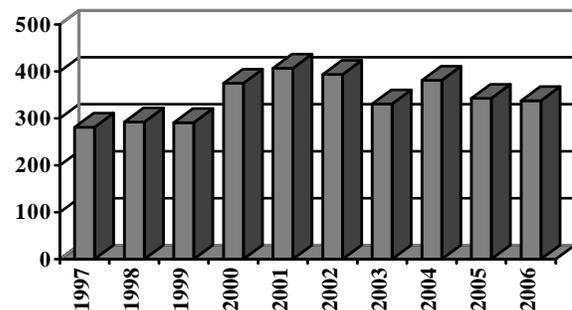
LARCENIES FROM PERSONS

Larcenies from persons describes pocket-picking or any theft that occurs within the victim's area of control. The thefts are non-confrontational, and often the victim is not aware of the theft until after it has occurred. If any confrontation between offender and victim takes place, the crime is recorded as a robbery.

In 2006, larcenies from persons was the fourth highest type of larceny in Cambridge. Thefts from people shopping and dining in Harvard Square and Central Square drove this total.

BUSINESS DISTRICT	2005	2006
Galleria/East Cambridge	45	44
Kendall Square/MIT	6	12
Inman Square/Harrington	15	24
Central Square	98	101
Cambridgeport/Riverside	7	10
Bay Square/Upper Broadway	9	10
Harvard Square	114	88
1500-1900 Mass. Ave.	12	19
Porter Square/North Cambridge	12	17
Alewife/West Cambridge	25	12

Larcenies from Persons, 1997-2006



The following represents three recurring scenarios that typically dominate larcenies from persons:

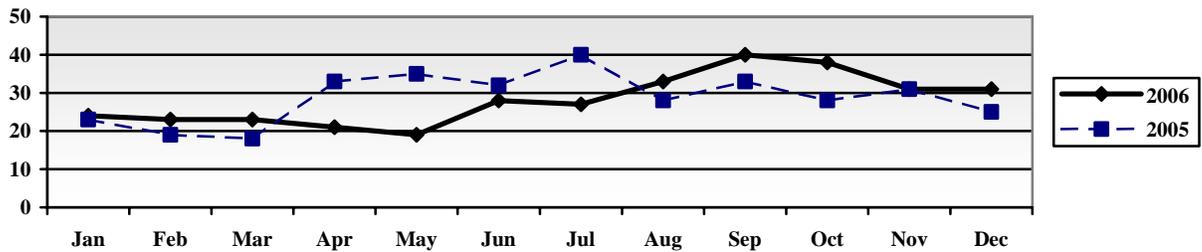
1. A diner places his or her jacket over the back of a chair, or places her purse under a chair. Someone sitting behind the victim either goes through the coat or purse and takes the valuables within, or takes the coat or purse entirely. This accounted for 30% of the larcenies from persons in 2006. Incidents at restaurants and cafes located in Harvard Square (49 incidents) and Central Square (26 incidents) dominated this categorization. Concentrations were reported at and around local restaurants in Harvard Square, specifically between the 1230 to 1360 blocks of Massachusetts Avenue. The 400 to 600 blocks of Massachusetts Avenue in Central Square saw 12% of the incidents. Not surprisingly, the Cambridge-side Galleria also saw multiple larcenies. Larcenies from person are generally easy to prevent. Remember to

always keep your belongings within your control. Do not leave purses on the floor, on the back of your chair, or otherwise unattended. Do not leave wallets or cell phones in the pockets of hanging coats.

2. Nearly 31% of the larcenies from persons in 2006 were larcenies of items left unattended by their owners. This includes purses and wallets unattended in restaurants, churches, schools, stores, bus stops, etc. Shoppers may place their bags on the floor when looking at an item and then leave the store, forgetting their belongings. When they return, their belongings are gone. In another scenario, diners often go into cafés and place all of their possessions at their table. When they leave their belongings behind to use the restroom, their valuables may be missing when they return to the table.

3. While the victim is walking through a public place, a pickpocket stealthily reaches into the victim's coat, purse, or backpack and removes valuables. This scenario accounted for about 21% of the larceny from person reports in 2006. Central Square reported the highest pocket-picking numbers, with concentrations in the early to mid-afternoons.

Monthly Totals for Larceny from Person



SHOPLIFTING

Shoplifting was one of the four larceny subcategories that decreased in 2006, registering a decline of 15% (61 incidents). The Cambridgeside Galleria and Central Square area reported the most incidents. It is important to note, however, that since shoplifting incidents are generally only reported when an arrest is made, underreporting is a serious problem. The actual shoplifting total may be 6 to 10 times the statistic given in this report. This year nearly half of all reports did not result in an arrest. This rate indicates an increase in shoplifting reports, but a decrease in arrests.

Shoplifters usually fall into one of five categories:

1. **Juvenile Shoplifters**, who steal on a dare to impress their peers, to get an “adrenaline rush,” or to compensate for lack of money.
2. **Impulse Shoplifters**, who seize a sudden chance, such as an unattended dressing room or a blind aisle. Sometimes, the “impulse” is a long line or sudden lack of money.
3. **Alcoholics, vagrants, and drug addicts**, who steal erratically and clumsily. When caught, this type of shoplifter is more likely than others to get violent (see “Shop Owner/Patron” assaults in the Assault section).
4. **Kleptomaniacs**, who steal to satisfy a psychological need.
5. **Professionals**, who steal expensive items and resell them to fences or “flea markets.”

BUSINESS DISTRICT	2005	2006
Galleria/East Cambridge	134	103
Kendall Square/MIT	4	3
Inman Square/Harrington	4	4
Central Square	119	107
Cambridgeport/Riverside	13	16
Bay Square/Upper Broadway	4	1
Harvard Square	52	56
1500–1900 Mass. Ave.	3	7
Porter Square/North Cambridge	31	21
Alewife/West Cambridge	39	26

LARCENY FROM RESIDENCES

Larcenies from Residences are non-burglary thefts from apartments, hallways, garages, or yards. “Non-burglary” means that no force or trespass was involved in the theft. A majority of these thefts are committed by people who have the right to be on the property. They include thefts committed by guests, roommates, family members, workers, and home health care providers. They also include thefts committed in common areas of apartment buildings, and thefts committed in property surrounding a house, such as the front yard, walkway, or tool shed.

Since larcenies from residences are usually committed by someone known to the victim, pattern identification and intervention by the police department is difficult. The most common larceny from residence scenarios are:

- *Thefts from a yard, porch, or other area surrounding a residence: 27%*
- *Thefts committed by visitors or guests to a residence: 19%*
- *Thefts committed by someone working in the residence, such as a painter, plumber, contractor, or maintenance man: 14%*
- *Thefts from a common hallway, foyer, or common area of an apartment building: 12%*
- *Thefts from a storage area of an apartment building or complex: 10%*
- *Thefts of mail or packages delivered by a parcel service: 6%*
- *Thefts committed by a family member, spouse, or romantic partner (i.e., “domestic thefts”): 3%*

NEIGHBORHOOD	2005	2006
East Cambridge	18	21
MIT	1	0
Inman/Harrington	15	14
Area 4	20	14
Cambridgeport	27	28
Mid-Cambridge	28	30
Riverside	12	21
Agassiz	6	16
Peabody	16	37
West Cambridge	16	37
North Cambridge	12	21
Cambridge Highlands	1	0
Strawberry Hill	3	7

LARCENY OF SERVICES

This crime includes taxicab fare evasion, “dining and ditching,” “gassing and going,” and other failures to pay for services already rendered.

There were 21 of these crimes reported in 2006. Over 40% of the incidents involved gasoline theft, and 24% were taxi fare evasion. Patrons “dinning and ditching” a restaurant or bar without paying made up 19% of the total.

Please see the Protect Yourself section starting on page 138 for ways to protect yourself from larceny.