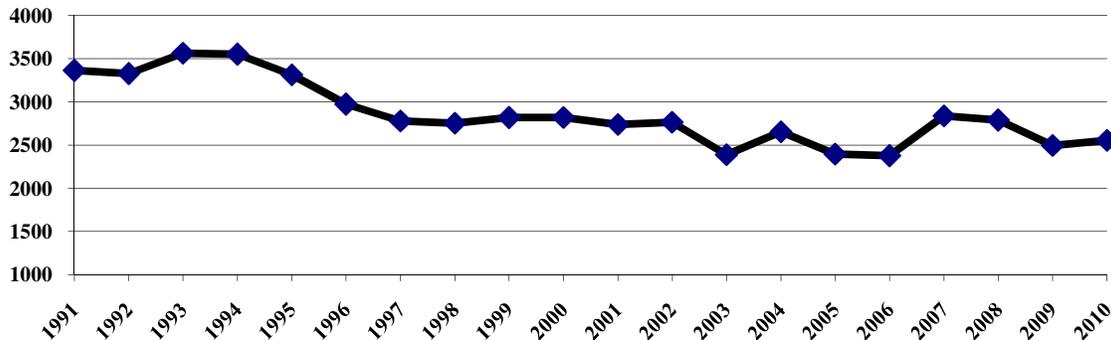


L A R C E N Y

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, 1991-2010**



2,496 reported in 2009 • 2,555 reported in 2010

Larceny is always the most common of the Part One crimes in Cambridge. This year it accounts for 71% of the total Part I crime and 80% of the total property crime. Larceny often produces the most patterns. The three categories that produce 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 become more popular and evolve, they become easier targets, easier to conceal, and ultimately easier to sell. This year’s larceny total represents a 2% increase over last year. The majority of the increase can be attributed to a 22% rise in larcenies from buildings and a 34% upsurge in larcenies of bicycles.

Larceny is further broken down into the nine categories listed in the table below. As can be seen from the total, there was an overall increase in larcenies this year in comparison to 2009. However, there were decreases reported in larcenies from motor vehicles, shoplifting, and miscellaneous larcenies.

Categorization	2009	2010	% Change
Larcenies from Buildings	321	393	+22%
Larcenies from MV	913	784	-14%
Larcenies from Persons	331	342	+3%
Larcenies of Bicycles	284	380	+34%
Shoplifting	369	365	-1%
Larcenies from Residences	185	192	+4%
Larcenies of License Plates	39	43	+10%
Larcenies of Services	28	31	+11%
Other (Unclassifiable) Larcenies	26	25	-4%
TOTAL	2,496	2,555	+2%

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	2009	2010
Central Square	69	77
Harvard Square	41	69
Galleria/East Cambridge	50	43
Bay Square/Upper Broadway	24	37
Alewife/West Cambridge	41	34
Kendall Square/MIT	23	34
Porter Square	18	31
1500–1900 Mass. Ave.	35	28
Inman Square	13	23
Cambridgeport/Riverside	7	17
Total	321	393

There were 393 larcenies from buildings reported this year. This total represents an increase of 72 incidents from the previous year, but is still 6% lower than the five-year average of 416 incidents.

TOP 5 HOT SPOTS OF 2010

1. Cambridge-side Galleria Mall
100 Cambridge-side Place – 22 incidents
2. Bally’s Health Club
1815 Massachusetts Avenue – 13 incidents
3. Cambridge Rindge and Latin School
459 Broadway – 8 incidents
4. Cambridge Athletic Club/Office Building
215 First St – 8 incidents
5. Upstairs on the Square
91 Winthrop St – 6 incidents

The following are the most common larceny from building scenarios in Cambridge in 2010:

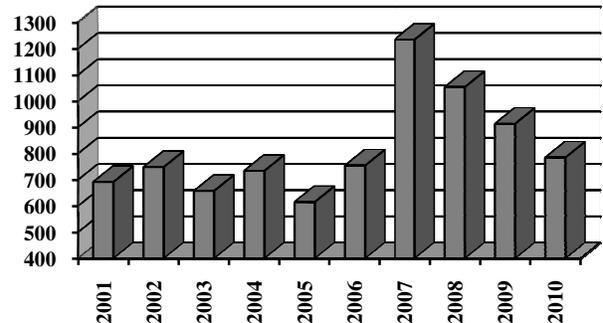
1. Someone leaves his or her belongings unattended for a short time and then comes back to find the property missing. Examples include leaving a coat in a public coat closet at a bar or leaving purses/bags at the back of a church during service. This scenario accounted for 19% of the incidents in 2010.
2. 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 and purses were the favorite target this year. This scenario accounted for 13% of the total reported larcenies from buildings this year.
3. A thief pries open a locker at a fitness club, commonly targeting wallets and cash. In 2010, 10% of larceny from building incidents occurred in this manner.
4. An employee of a commercial establishment leaves his or her personal property in a “back room” where he or she thinks it will be safe. Later, the employee notices that the property is missing. The most common targets in this crime include purses, bags, and cell phones. Approximately 10% of incidents reported in 2010 occurred in this manner.
5. A thief waits for or finds the opportunity to steal property left unattended on a store counter. Examples include when an employee leaves a cell phone on the counter while helping a customer or a shopper places their wallet down while buying an item and forgets the wallet when they leave, only to return and find it missing. This scenario accounted for 8% of the total reported in 2010. Cell phones, wallets and cash were the most common targets.

LARCENY FROM MOTOR VEHICLES

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

A dramatic increase in larcenies from motor vehicles (LMVs) was reported in 2007, as GPS navigation units became a hot commodity. Since the peak in 2007, this crime type has steadily decreased by 13-15% each year. In 2010, 784 LMVs were reported citywide, which is 14% less than both the 2009 total of 913 and the five-year average (2005-2009) of 914. The Mid-Cambridge neighborhood reported the largest number of LMVs in 2010 with 117 incidents, followed by Cambridgeport with 102 and West Cambridge with 101. Riverside experienced the largest numerical increase, with 27 more LMVs reported this year than in 2009, equaling a 56% rise. The next largest increase was in Inman, where 23 more LMVs were reported in 2010, resulting in a 121% increase.

Larceny from Motor Vehicles, 2001-2010



Numerically, Cambridgeport saw the largest decrease this year (-58 incidents), followed by Peabody (-45 incidents) and East Cambridge (-28 incidents).

Neighborhood	2009	2010	% Change
Mid-Cambridge	115	117	+2%
Cambridgeport	160	102	-36%
West Cambridge	116	101	-13%
Riverside	48	75	+56%
Area 4	69	73	+6%
North Cambridge	74	67	-9%
Peabody	104	59	-43%
East Cambridge	86	58	-33%
Agassiz	58	50	-14%
Inman/Harrington	19	42	+121%
Strawberry Hill	19	18	-5%
MIT	36	11	-69%
Cambridge Highlands	9	11	+22%
Total	913	784	-14%

GPS navigation systems continued to be the main target in LMVs this year. Nearly 34% of all the LMVs in 2010, or 263 incidents, involved the theft of GPS systems. This is a reduction from 2009 when 333 GPS thefts were reported, accounting for 36% of the LMVs citywide, and from 2008 when 453 GPS thefts were reported, accounting for roughly 43% of the LMVs citywide.

Although by far the most popular targets, GPS systems were not the only items to be stolen in these larcenies. Other common targets included small electronics left in plain view (MP3 players, cell phones, laptops, etc.), cash, car stereos, purses/wallets, backpacks, and clothing. Tires and other miscellaneous car parts were also stolen with high frequency this year.

Considering how widespread and pervasive this type of crime is in Cambridge, it is often difficult to determine when a pattern is emerging. However, there are a few areas where LMV activity tends to be concentrated. One of these areas includes Cambridge Center, Technology Square, Kendall Square and the streets near the Galleria Mall. This area typically sees a high number of daytime GPS thefts from vehicles in local parking garages and lots, although it did not experience nearly as many incidents in 2010 as it has in recent years. Another concentration can often be found along the Mass Ave corridor between Agassiz and Peabody, where larcenies are typically committed overnight while vehicles are parked on Mass Ave and residential side streets. However, in 2010, no significant patterns emerged in this area either. The main hotspot for LMV activity in 2010 was along the periphery of Harvard Square, particularly south and west of the Square between Concord Ave and Mt. Auburn St, and east of the Square along Kirkland St between Agassiz and Mid-Cambridge. Patterns were detected in the Harvard Sq periphery sporadically throughout 2010, but the most notable of these patterns took place during the second quarter. In this particular pattern, during the first few weeks of June, a male suspect was seen riding around on a bicycle and smashing car windows with bricks in order to steal bags from inside. In late June, a Cambridge male matching the suspect's description was arrested by Harvard University Police in an unrelated incident and the LMV pattern came to an end.

One area not included in the typical concentration areas above also experienced a notable LMV pattern in 2010. This larceny pattern took place in Cambridgeport in the parking lot of Whole Foods on River St and also sporadically in the parking lot at Trader Joes/Microcenter on Memorial Dr. At the Whole Foods parking lot alone, 17 incidents were reported between late September and mid November. The pattern came to an end when a well-known suspect was arrested on warrants in late November.

There was also a somewhat unusual series of LMVs involving the thefts of car stereos in June. The incidents were all reported in the lower half of Cambridge, with a focus in the area of Mid-Cambridge, Cambridgeport, and Riverside. A total of 20 overnight incidents were reported during the second quarter, the majority of which involved Hondas with model years in the 1990s and early 2000s. One possible explanation for the thefts is that the stereos in these older model Hondas were made before a code system was implemented to prevent thieves from being able to install a stolen stereo into another vehicle. No arrests were made, but the incidents cooled off towards the end of the quarter. It should be noted that Somerville experienced a similar increase in this type of theft in 2010.

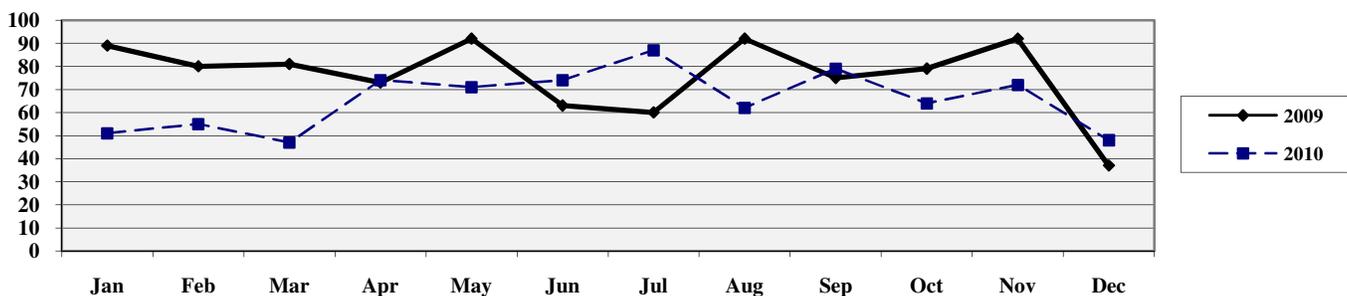
Top Three Methods of Entry

1. The most common method of entry into motor vehicles in 2010 was by breaking one or more windows of the vehicle. This method was reported in 53% of the larcenies.
2. The second most common larceny from motor vehicle MO was through unlocked doors. This entry point accounted for 14% of the LMVs in 2010.
3. The third 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 13% of the incidents.

Top Ten Stolen Items of 2010

1. GPS Navigation Systems – 363 reported stolen
2. Backpacks/purses/wallets – 92 reported stolen
3. MP3 Player – 71 reported stolen
4. Car Stereos/CD players – 69 reported stolen
5. Laptop Computers – 67 reported stolen
6. Cash – 67 incidents
7. Various Automobile Parts – 63 reported stolen
8. Miscellaneous Electronics – 47 reported stolen
9. Cellular Telephones – 41 reported stolen
10. Clothing – 29 items reported stolen

Monthly Totals for Larceny from Motor Vehicles



HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

- Larcenies from motor vehicles have consistently averaged between 16-26% of the total serious crime index in Cambridge for over 20 years. This year's car break total accounted for 22% of the Crime Index Total.
- 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. From 2001 to 2005, the average number of larcenies from motor vehicles rose ever so slightly to 692 incidents per year. The average number for the past five years (2006-2010) has risen dramatically to 948 incidents, due to high levels of GPS thefts in recent years. The GPS system has become the favorite target of thieves not only in Cambridge, but in police jurisdictions throughout the region, Massachusetts, the United States, and the world.

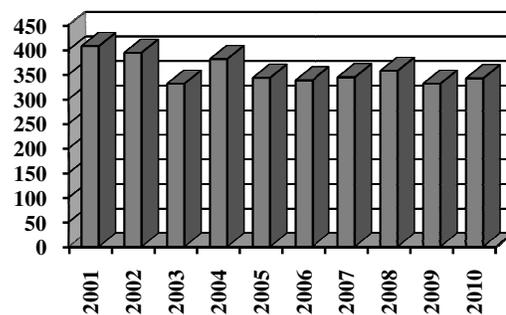
LARCENY FROM PERSONS

Larceny from person 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.

Larcenies from persons in 2010 were 3% higher than the number reported in 2009. Periodic dipper activity in Central Square and Harvard Square drove this total. This was particularly true in Harvard Square, where patterns of dipper activity emerged in March and April (resulting in three arrests in April), in May (no arrests made), and June and July (with a suspect arrested in July). With the help of extra patrols in the area, this crime type cooled off as the summer progressed and no full-fledged patterns re-emerged for the rest of the year. Central Square and Porter Square experienced some similar activity this year but to a lesser degree. See the scenarios below for more information on dipper activity in the city.

BUSINESS DISTRICT	2009	2010
Harvard Square	102	127
Central Square	91	86
Galleria/East Cambridge	45	39
Alewife/West Cambridge	12	19
Porter Square/North Cambridge	21	18
1500–1900 Mass. Ave.	20	15
Kendall Square/MIT	8	13
Cambridgeport/Riverside	8	10
Bay Square/Upper Broadway	9	8
Inman Square/Harrington	15	7
Total	331	342

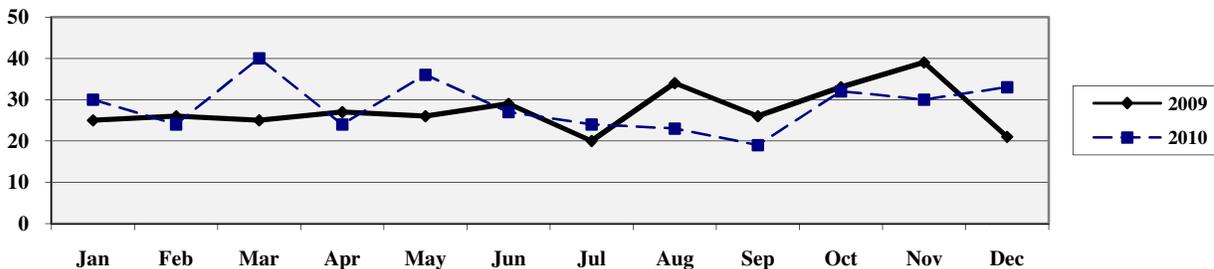
Larceny from Persons, 2001-2010



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

- One of the most common larceny scenarios in Cambridge is when 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 from within, or takes the coat or purse entirely. This scenario, also known as dipper activity, accounted for 44% of the larcenies from persons in 2010. Incidents at restaurants and cafes located in Central Square (44 incidents) and Harvard Square (77 incidents) dominated this categorization. In Central Square, establishments on Mass Ave such as the *Middle East*, *Starbucks*, and the *Clear Conscience Café* saw the majority of the incidents. In Harvard Square, concentrations were reported at and around local restaurants, specifically between the 1200 to 1400 blocks of Massachusetts Avenue (*Grafton St Grille*, *Au Bon Pain*, and the *Harvard COOP Cafe*), 30-50 Church St (*Border Café* and *Dado Tea*), 27 Brattle St (*Crema Café*), 36 JFK St (*Starbucks*), 83 Mt Auburn St (*Felipe's Taqueria*), and 96 Winthrop St (*Tommy Doyle's*). Incidents of this type at the Cambridge-side Galleria have been dropping in recent years, with only five reported in 2010. These types of larcenies from persons 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.
- Over 37% of the larcenies from persons in 2010 were thefts of items left unattended by their owners. This includes purses and wallets left briefly unattended in restaurants, churches, schools, stores, bus stops, parks, etc. In one typical scenario, a shopper may leave her purse in a shopping cart while looking at items on a shelf; when she returns to the cart, the purse is gone. In another scenario, a student enters a café and places all of his possessions at a table. When he leaves his belongings behind to use the restroom, his valuables may be missing when he returns to the table.
- Yet another popular scenario is pocket-picking. While a 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 11% of the larceny from person reports in 2010. Harvard Square and Central Square reported the highest pocket-picking numbers with 13 and 7, respectively. Concentrations were most prevalent from noon through the early evening.

Monthly Totals for Larceny from Person



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.

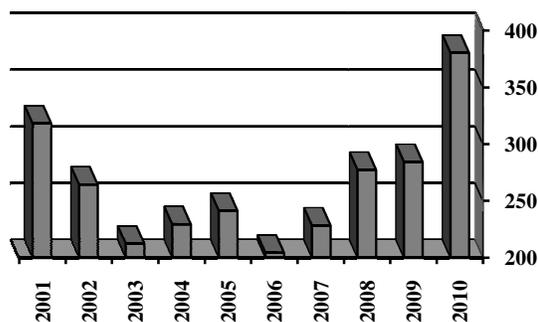
Between 1989 and 1994, bicycle theft exhibited a sharp ascent, soaring from an average of 270 per year in the 1980s to 584 in 1994. During the time between 1994 and 2003, the crime steadily decreased, with the exception of a slight increase reported in 2000. Since 2005, bicycle thefts have averaged approximately 247 thefts a year. The 380 thefts reported in 2010 is the city’s highest total in over 10 years.

This year saw 380 incidents of stolen bicycles, an increase of 34% over 2009. Not surprisingly, the largest numbers of bicycle thefts occurred in the summer months of July and August (66 and 73 incidents, respectively), when bicycles typically pack the streets and sidewalks because of the warmer weather. May, June, September, and October also experienced higher rates of these incidents (between 31 and 52 incidents each). The business districts with the most incidents were: Central Sq (62 thefts), Cambridgeport/Riverside (48 thefts), 1500-1900 blocks of Mass Ave (43 thefts), Inman Sq (40 thefts), and Harvard Sq (36 thefts).

Despite the drastic increase in bicycle thefts in 2010, very few defined patterns emerged. In June and July, areas of First and Third Streets in East Cambridge experienced an increase in bicycle thefts, culminating with the arrest of an Everett man in July. There were also concentrations of thefts seen during the summer months in the Cambridge Center garages, in the areas of Green St and Franklin St in Cambridgeport and Riverside, and along Mt. Auburn St in the Harvard Sq area. A total of five individuals were arrested in unrelated bicycle thefts over the course of 2010; in addition, four bike-related arrests for receiving stolen property were also made.

NEIGHBORHOOD	2009	2010
Cambridgeport	44	60
Mid-Cambridge	40	42
Riverside	34	41
East Cambridge	30	40
Area 4	28	33
North Cambridge	25	33
Peabody	21	33
West Cambridge	21	32
Inman/Harrington	19	28
Agassiz	8	17
MIT	8	15
Strawberry Hill	3	4
Highlands	3	2
Total	284	380

Bicycle Larceny, 2001-2010



Locks present little difficulty to bicycle thieves, who often bring bolt cutters or pry bars with them. Nearly half of all reported bicycle thefts this year involved locked and unattended bicycles on a street, sidewalk, or rack. Another 19% percent of the larcenies involved bicycles that were left unlocked and unprotected. Unlocked bicycles that were on private property followed, making up 15% of reported incidents. These thefts occurred in apartment building hallways, or when bicycles were left in private yards.

SHOPLIFTING

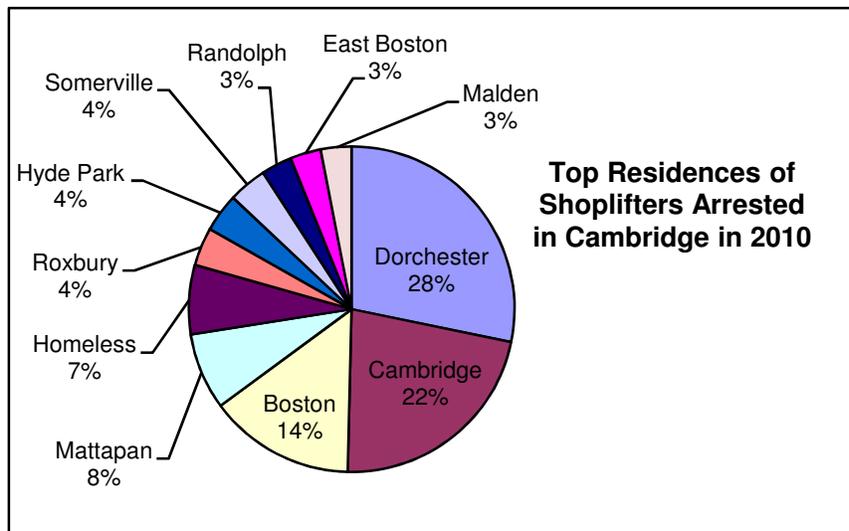
Shoplifting was one of only three larceny subcategories that decreased in 2010, dropping 1% (four incidents). The Cambridge-side Galleria reported more than three times as many incidents as any other area in Cambridge this year; Harvard Square and the Alewife/West Cambridge area reported the next highest amounts. It is important to note that since shoplifting incidents are often only reported when an arrest is made, underreporting can be a serious problem. The actual shoplifting total may be six to ten times greater than the statistic given. However, more than half of the reported incidents in 2010 did *not* result in an arrest, which may indicate an increase in the tendency to report incidents regardless of whether an arrest was made or not.

BUSINESS DISTRICT	2009	2010
Galleria/East Cambridge	167	179
Harvard Square	61	57
Alewife/West Cambridge	30	34
Central Square	63	31
Porter Square/North Cambridge	13	25
Cambridgeport/Riverside	7	20
Inman Square/Harrington	5	8
1500-1900 Mass. Ave.	2	7
Kendall Square/MIT	3	3
Bay Square/Upper Broadway	1	1
Total	369	365

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.”

The following is a breakdown of the residences of persons arrested for shoplifting in Cambridge in 2009:



Top Shoplifter Residences	
Dorchester	37
Cambridge	29
Boston	19
Mattapan	10
Homeless	9
Roxbury	5
Hyde Park	5
Somerville	5
Randolph	4
East Boston	4
Malden	4

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. There were 192 of these larcenies reported in 2010, a 4% increase over 2009. The most common larceny from residence scenarios are:

- *Thefts of mail/packages delivered by a parcel service: 26%*
- *Thefts from a yard, porch, or other area surrounding a residence: 22%*
- *Thefts committed by visitors or guests of a residence: 19%*
- *Thefts committed by someone working in the residence, such as a painter, plumber, contractor, or maintenance worker: 17%*
- *Thefts from a common hallway, foyer, or common area of an apartment building: 7%*
- *Thefts committed by a family member, spouse, or romantic partner (i.e., “domestic thefts”): 4%*
- *Thefts committed while victims are in the process of moving: 3%*
- *Thefts from a storage area of an apartment building or complex: 3%*

NEIGHBORHOOD	2008	2010
Mid-Cambridge	36	40
Cambridgeport	33	24
Area 4	11	21
North Cambridge	16	20
Peabody	26	18
Riverside	8	17
Inman/Harrington	15	16
East Cambridge	20	15
West Cambridge	12	10
Agassiz	4	6
Strawberry Hill	4	3
Cambridge Highlands	0	2
MIT	0	0
Total	185	192

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 31 of these crimes reported in 2010. “Dining and ditching” incidents and gasoline thefts were reported most often this year (ten incidents each), followed by taxi fare evasion (eight incidents) and auto repair/service thefts (two incidents). The final incident consisted of a suspect “piggybacking” behind another vehicle that was leaving a parking garage, to avoid being stopped by the mechanical gate and having to pay.

LARCENY (MISCELLANEOUS)

Larceny miscellaneous includes all other unclassifiable larcenies.

Unlike in recent years when Cambridge experienced an extensive series of parking meter thefts, there were no patterns of any miscellaneous types of larceny in 2009 or 2010. Miscellaneous larcenies decreased by 4% this year, dropping just one incident from 26 to 25.

Please see the Protect Yourself section starting on page 136 for ways to protect yourself from larceny.