



Problem-Oriented Guides for Police
Problem-Specific Guides Series
No. 59



Street Robbery

Khadija M. Monk
Justin A. Heinsonen
John E. Eck

www.cops.usdoj.gov



Center for
Problem-Oriented Policing

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The Internet references cited in this publication were valid as of June 2009. Given that URLs and web sites are in constant flux, neither the author nor the COPS Office can vouch for their current validity.

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About the Problem-Specific Guide Series

The *Problem-Specific Guides* summarize knowledge about how police can reduce the harm caused by specific crime and disorder problems. They are guides to prevention and to improving the overall response to incidents, not to investigating offenses or handling specific incidents. Neither do they cover all of the technical details about how to implement specific responses. The guides are written for police—of whatever rank or assignment—who must address the specific problem the guides cover. The guides will be most useful to officers who:

- **Understand basic problem-oriented policing principles and methods.** The guides are not primers in problem-oriented policing. They deal only briefly with the initial decision to focus on a particular problem, methods to analyze the problem, and means to assess the results of a problem-oriented policing project. They are designed to help police decide how best to analyze and address a problem they have already identified. (A companion series of *Problem-Solving Tools* guides has been produced to aid in various aspects of problem analysis and assessment.)
- **Can look at a problem in depth.** Depending on the complexity of the problem, you should be prepared to spend perhaps weeks, or even months, analyzing and responding to it. Carefully studying a problem before responding helps you design the right strategy, one that is most likely to work in your community. You should not blindly adopt the responses others have used; you must decide whether they are appropriate to your local situation. What is true in one place may not be true elsewhere; what works in one place may not work everywhere.



- **Are willing to consider new ways of doing police business.** The guides describe responses that other police departments have used or that researchers have tested. While not all of these responses will be appropriate to your particular problem, they should help give a broader view of the kinds of things you could do. You may think you cannot implement some of these responses in your jurisdiction, but perhaps you can. In many places, when police have discovered a more effective response, they have succeeded in having laws and policies changed, improving the response to the problem. (A companion series of *Response Guides* has been produced to help you understand how commonly-used police responses work on a variety of problems.)
- **Understand the value and the limits of research knowledge.** For some types of problems, a lot of useful research is available to the police; for other problems, little is available. Accordingly, some guides in this series summarize existing research whereas other guides illustrate the need for more research on that particular problem. Regardless, research has not provided definitive answers to all the questions you might have about the problem. The research may help get you started in designing your own responses, but it cannot tell you exactly what to do. This will depend greatly on the particular nature of your local problem. In the interest of keeping the guides readable, not every piece of relevant research has been cited, nor has every point been attributed to its sources. To have done so would have overwhelmed and distracted the reader. The references listed at the end of each guide are those drawn on most heavily; they are not a complete bibliography of research on the subject.
- **Are willing to work with others to find effective solutions to the problem.** The police alone cannot implement many of the responses discussed in the guides. They must frequently implement them in partnership with other responsible private and public bodies including other government agencies, non-governmental organizations, private businesses, public utilities, community groups, and individual citizens. An effective problem-solver must know how to forge genuine partnerships with others and be prepared to invest considerable effort



in making these partnerships work. Each guide identifies particular individuals or groups in the community with whom police might work to improve the overall response to that problem. Thorough analysis of problems often reveals that individuals and groups other than the police are in a stronger position to address problems and that police ought to shift some greater responsibility to them to do so. Response Guide No. 3, *Shifting and Sharing Responsibility for Public Safety Problems*, provides further discussion of this topic.

The COPS Office defines community policing as “a philosophy that promotes organizational strategies, which support the systematic use of partnerships and problem-solving techniques, to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues such as crime, social disorder, and fear of crime.” These guides emphasize *problem-solving* and *police-community partnerships* in the context of addressing specific public safety problems. For the most part, the organizational strategies that can facilitate problem-solving and police-community partnerships vary considerably and discussion of them is beyond the scope of these guides.

These guides have drawn on research findings and police practices in the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the Netherlands, and Scandinavia. Even though laws, customs and police practices vary from country to country, it is apparent that the police everywhere experience common problems. In a world that is becoming increasingly interconnected, it is important that police be aware of research and successful practices beyond the borders of their own countries.

Each guide is informed by a thorough review of the research literature and reported police practice, and each guide is anonymously peer-reviewed by a line police officer, a police executive and a researcher prior to publication. The review process is independently managed by the COPS Office, which solicits the reviews.



For more information about problem-oriented policing, visit the Center for Problem-Oriented Policing online at www.popcenter.org. This website offers free online access to:

- the *Problem-Specific Guides* series,
- the companion *Response Guides* and *Problem-Solving Tools* series,
- special publications on crime analysis and on policing terrorism,
- instructional information about problem-oriented policing and related topics,
- an interactive problem-oriented policing training exercise,
- an interactive *Problem Analysis Module*,
- online access to important police research and practices, and
- information about problem-oriented policing conferences and award programs.



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The project team that developed the guide series comprised Herman Goldstein (University of Wisconsin Law School), Ronald V. Clarke (Rutgers University), John E. Eck (University of Cincinnati), Michael S. Scott (University of Wisconsin Law School), Rana Sampson (Police Consultant), and Deborah Lamm Weisel (North Carolina State University).

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Debra Cohen, Ph.D. oversaw the project for the COPS Office and research for the guides was conducted at the Criminal Justice Library at Rutgers University by Phyllis Schultze. Suzanne Fregly edited this guide.



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The Problem of Street Robbery

What This Guide Does and Does Not Cover

This guide addresses street robbery and reviews factors contributing to its occurrence. It then provides a series of questions to help you analyze your local street robbery problem. Finally, it reviews responses to the problem and what is known about them from evaluative research and police practice.

In this guide, a street robbery is defined as a crime with the following five characteristics:

- the offender targets a victim;
- the victim is a pedestrian and a stranger;
- the offender attempts or completes a theft of cash or property;
- the offender uses force or the threat of force against the victim; and
- the offense occurs in a public or semipublic place, such as on a street, in an alley, in a parking garage, in a public park, on or near public transportation, or in a shared apartment hallway.

Importantly, a street robbery need not involve a weapon, nor is it necessary that the offender injures the victim.[§]

Several subtypes of street robbery exist that vary in frequency depending on local circumstances. Among the better known are:

- purse-snatching (referred to as “snatch theft” in this guide);
- robbery of migrant laborers;
- robbery at automated teller machines;
- robbery of drunken bar patrons; robbery of students (e.g., middle- and high-school students and college students); and
- robbery of passengers near public transportation systems.

[§]This guide uses the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program's definition of robbery as "...the taking or attempting to take anything of value from the care, custody, or control of a person or persons by force or threat of force or violence and/or by putting the victim in fear." (FBI, 2008) www.fbi.gov/ucr/cius2008/offenses/violent_crime/robbery.html



Street robbery is one form of a larger set of problems related to street crime and issues of violent crime among strangers. This guide, however, is limited to addressing the particular harms stranger-perpetrated street robbery causes. Problems related to street robbery not directly addressed in this guide, because they have specific opportunity structures and require separate analyses and responses, include the following:

- commercial robbery (e.g., robbery of banks, gas stations and convenience stores);
- pickpocketing;
- vehicle-related robbery (e.g., robbery of armored trucks and taxi drivers, and carjacking);
- nonstranger street robbery (e.g., drug-related robberies, robberies by prostitutes and robberies by friends, relatives or spouses);
- home invasions;
- larceny-theft (note that some police agencies may record purse-snatching as larceny-theft);
- assaults; and
- drug-dealing.

Other guides in this series—a list of which you can find at the end of this guide—address some of these related problems. In particular, you may want to read several other robbery-related problem-oriented policing guides in conjunction with this guide, including:

- *Robbery at Automated Teller Machines;*
- *Robbery of Taxi Drivers;*
- *Robbery of Convenience Stores;*
- *Bank Robbery;*
- *Crime Against Tourists; and*
- *Drug-Dealing in Open-Air Markets.*

For the most up-to-date listing of current and future guides, see www.popcenter.org.



General Description of the Problem

The street robbery patterns mentioned below are general and based on research from several different sources. Therefore, it is important that you study the particular patterns in your own community, as they may vary from these general patterns.

Incidents

Street robberies constitute a considerable portion of all robberies. In 2006, 44 percent of robberies reported to U.S. police were street robberies.¹ Nevertheless, U.S. robbery rates have declined since the mid-1990s. In 1994, the robbery rate was 6.3 per 1,000 people, compared with a rate of 2.6 in 2005.⁸ These recent declines in street robbery, however, do not hold across all countries. For instance, robbery rates have increased in England and Wales over the last decade, particularly from 2000 to 2002.² National robbery rates are informative, but it is sometimes unclear whether they fluctuate with nationwide economic changes, drug trends or some other pattern.

Offenders

Research has provided a demographic sketch of typical street robbers. First, street robbery appears to be a young person's crime. Offenders tend to be in their late teens and early 20s.³ In the United States, almost half of offenders arrested for robbery were under 21, and nearly two-thirds were under 25.⁴ Second, the overwhelming majority of arrested street robbers are male.⁵ Finally, regarding race, more blacks than whites are arrested for street robbery in the United States. Specifically, over half of the robbery arrestees in 2007 were black (56%), while 42 percent of the arrestees were white.⁶

⁸2006 rates are not comparable with 2005 rates due to the redesign of the 2006 National Crime Victimization Survey (they switched from victimizations to incidents, among other changes). The 2006 data come from the Uniform Crime Reports.



Victims

Street robbers search for victims who appear to have money or other valuables—for example, students and tourists. They also target people who appear to be the most vulnerable—like young adults using ATMs alone at night or under the influence of alcohol.⁷ Offenders also look for victims who seem unaware of their immediate surroundings. Pedestrians who look lost, are using a cell phone, are rummaging through their bags, or are listening to MP3 players might appear less alert and more vulnerable to street robbers than other people.

Times, Days and Locations

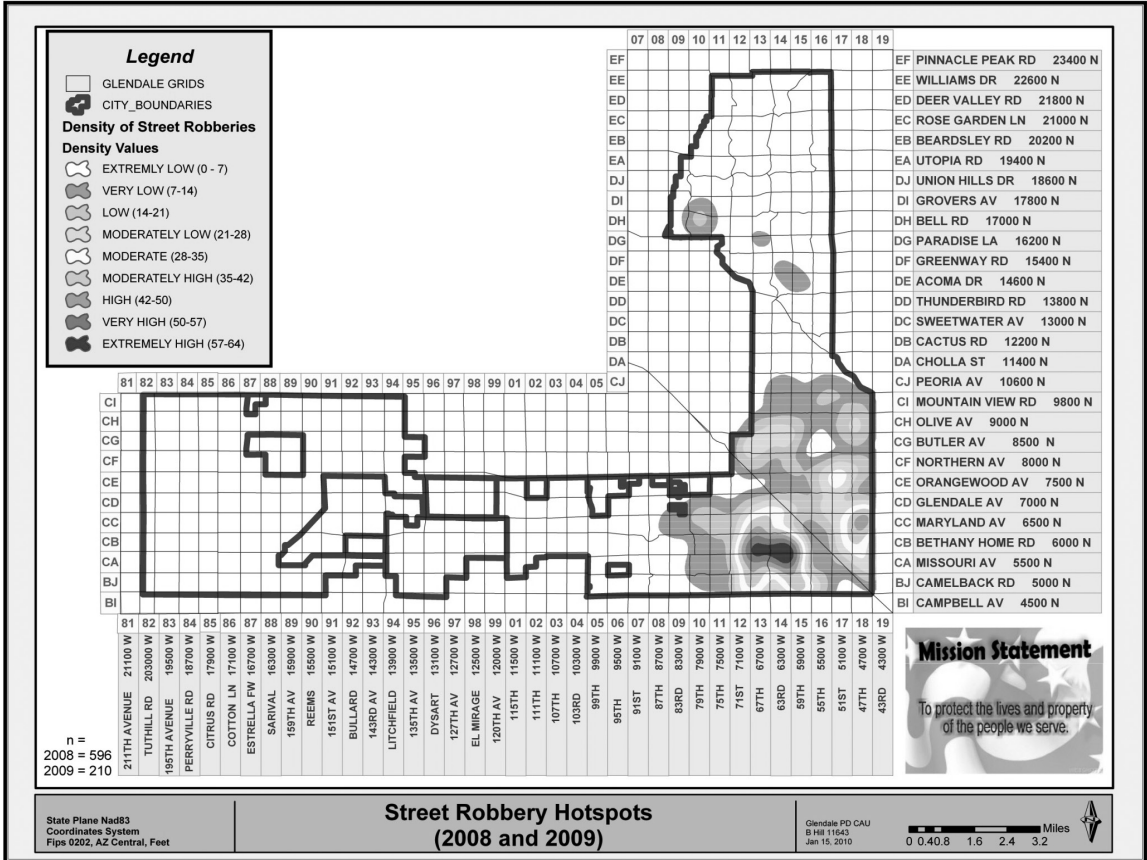
Overall, street robbery patterns appear to cluster by times, days and locations—for instance, street robberies often occur on weekends, when entertainment districts are busier and associated businesses are open later. With that in mind, below we have summarized how street robberies cluster by times, days and locations.

Times. Overall, most street robberies occur at night. For some groups, however, peak robbery times vary with their routine activity patterns. For instance, most elderly people run errands early in the day. Accordingly, offenders usually rob older people (65 and above) in the morning and early afternoons.⁸ By contrast, offenders are more likely to rob youths (aged 17 and below) between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.⁹ This timeframe aligns with school dismissal, when students routinely go home or elsewhere. Yet offenders usually rob young adults during the evening.¹⁰ This group is often in public later at night in pursuit of entertainment. Drunken bar patrons or migrant workers returning home after work on paydays might also be at high risk during late-night hours due to the absence of effective guardians and the remote locations of some entertainment venues.

Days. In general, most street robberies occur on weekends. In Cincinnati, for example, most street robberies occur late on Saturday evenings and early on Sunday mornings.¹¹ U.K. street robberies also increase on weekends—a pattern linked to social functions that attract many targets in a single area.¹²



Source: Glendale (Arizona) Police Department.

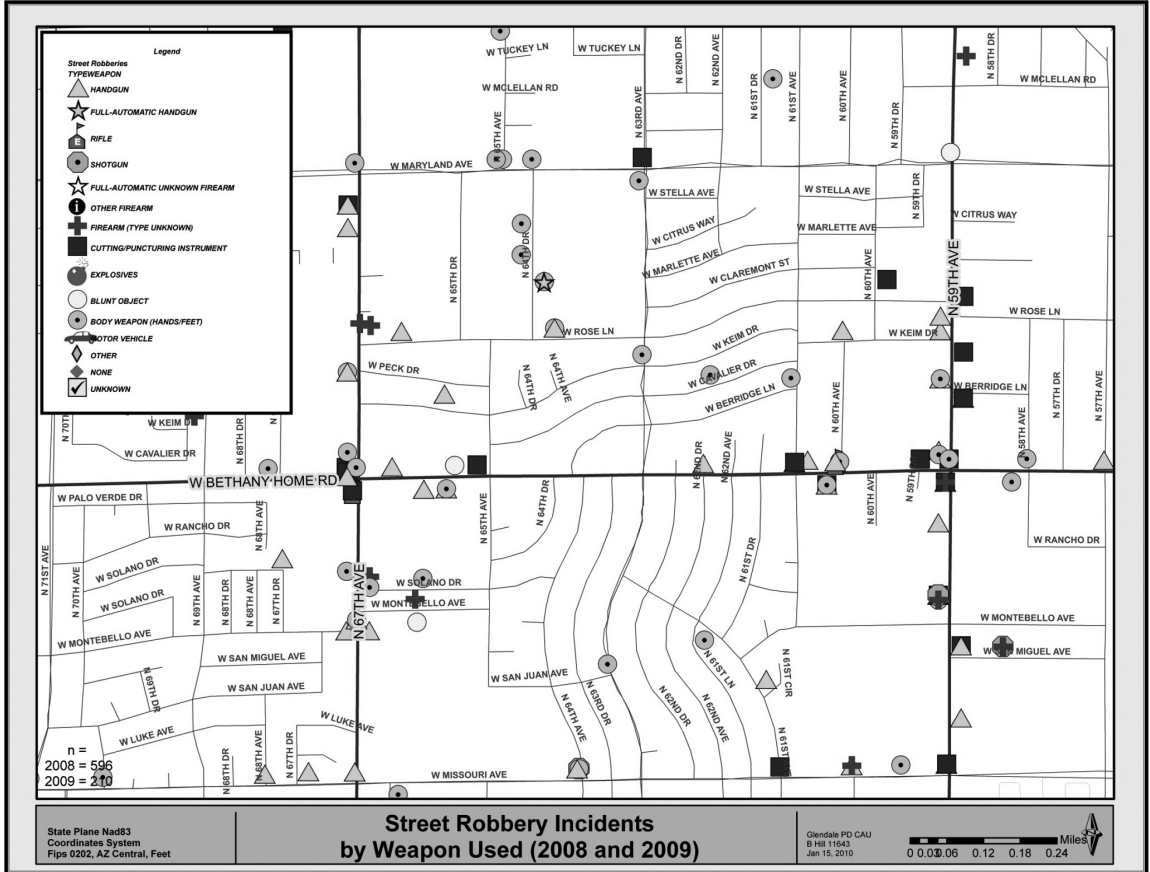


Street robberies are often concentrated in specific areas, as shown here. Hot spot maps are useful for defining a specific robbery problem.

Locations. Most street robberies occur in urban areas. U.S. robbery victimization rates are about twice as high for urban residents than suburban residents.¹³ This trend is similar in England and Wales. Almost half (44%) of street robberies occur one mile or less from the victims' homes—perhaps because people are near home most of the time or offenders specifically target them near their homes. Other frequent robbery locations include parking lots and garages—followed by parks, fields, playgrounds, and areas near public transportation.¹⁴ Street robberies associated with public transportation are more prevalent in areas like larger cities, where its availability and use are common.



Source: Glendale (Arizona) Police Department.



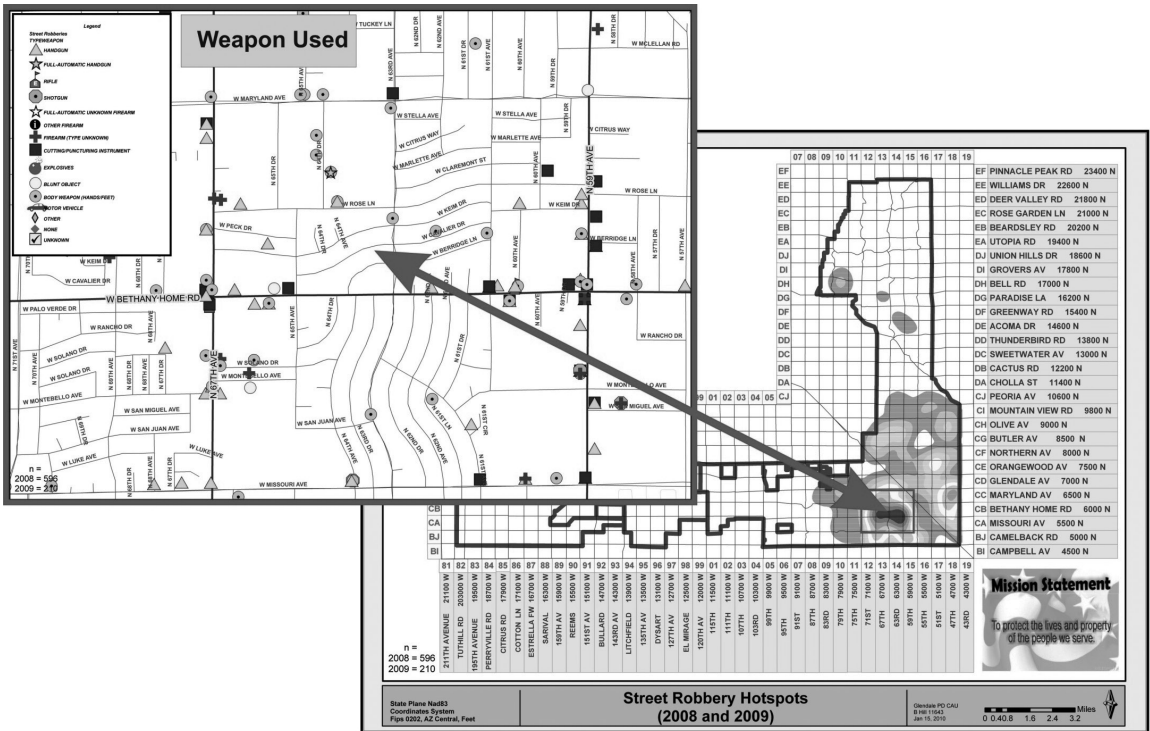
Even within a small area, there can be a range of types of street robberies. Here we see different types of weapons used. This might indicate overlapping street robbery problems, instead of a single problem.

Targets

Finally, street robbers tend to take certain items during a robbery: cash, purses, wallets, credit cards, mobile phones, MP3 players, jewelry, clothing, and other small electronic devices (e.g., cameras and smaller laptop computers). The proliferation of small, portable, expensive electronic items (see figure) may be linked with street



Source: Glendale (Arizona) Police Department.



Hot spots can contain smaller hot spots. The hot spot in the city scale map, upon close inspection, has several different clusters of street robberies. Small area analysis is usually better than wide area analysis.

robbery in some locations.¹⁵ The items listed above are “hot products”¹⁶ that have similar **CRAVED** characteristics:

- **Concealable**—the robber can hide the items on his or her person;
- **Removable**—the robber can easily take the items from the victim;
- **Available**—the items are commonly found on potential victims;
- **Valuable**—the items are useful to the robber or others;
- **Enjoyable**—the items are fun to use; and
- **Disposable**—the robber can easily sell the items to or trade the items with others.¹⁷



Photo by John Eck.



Distracted pedestrians with conspicuous CRAVED items make good robbery targets.

Harms Caused by Street Robbery

Street robbery is a major source of fear among the public because victims face a sudden threat to life, a loss of control, and an invasion of personal space.¹⁸ Street robbery is an especially fear-inducing crime because of the context in which it is likely to occur—during the course of someone’s routine activities. For instance, the 2005 National Crime Victimization Survey showed that street robbers attacked most victims on their way to or from work, school, shopping, or running errands. The risk of injury and death during an attack further substantiates the public’s fear of robbery. Offenders physically attack approximately half of robbery victims, and about 20 percent require medical attention.¹⁹ In 2005, the FBI estimated that about 6 percent of all murders were robbery-related.²⁰ Some estimates suggest occurrences of robbery-murder are even greater. The type of weapon used typically distinguishes



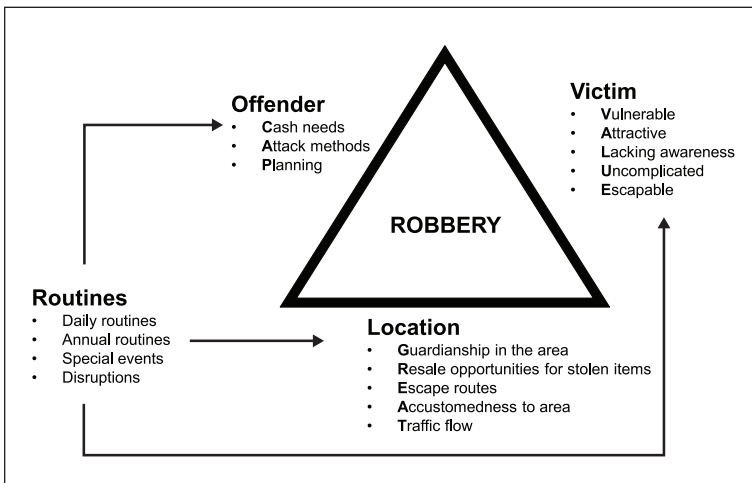
robbery from robbery-murder. Roughly two-thirds of robbery-murders involve guns, but offenders use guns in less than one-third of robberies.²¹ Furthermore, gun robberies are about three times more likely to result in the victim's death compared with knife robberies, and knife robberies are about three times more likely than robberies involving other kinds of weapons.²²

Factors Contributing to Street Robbery

Understanding the factors that contribute to your community's street robbery problem will help you frame your own local analysis questions, determine effectiveness measures, recognize key intervention points, and select appropriate responses.

Local analysis may reveal unique situations, not on this list, that you may need to address. You should base local analysis on the street robbery analysis triangle (Figure 1). This triangle is a modification of the widely used problem analysis triangle (see www.popcenter.org for a description). It organizes basic factors that contribute to robbery problems. Though no single factor completely accounts for the street robbery problem, the interrelated dynamics among *victims*, *locations*, *offenders*, and *routines* all contribute to street robbery patterns.

Figure 1. Street Robbery Analysis Triangle.





Street robberies occur when motivated offenders encounter suitable victims in an environment that facilitates robbery. A street robbery problem emerges when victims repeatedly encounter offenders in the same area. In short, a combination of circumstances will lead to a robbery, not any single circumstance. For example, a street robbery is likely to occur when an offender, pressed for cash, spots a drunken person leaving a bar alone, heading toward a poorly lit, isolated location. A pattern of robberies could occur if offenders notice drunken people taking similar routes after leaving the bar. Different types of routines can change offender, victim and location characteristics, thus altering robbery patterns (e.g., midweek work and school routines may produce different robbery patterns from weekend or holiday routines).

Depending on the specific details of a street robbery problem, the relative importance of each side of the triangle and routines will vary. Addressing any one element in Figure 1 might reduce a problem, but addressing more than one side will better ensure that the robbery problem will decline. The sections below describe each of the four factors in more detail.

Offenders

Compared with commercial or other types of robberies, street robberies tend to be more opportunistic and occur in a more open and less predictable environment. Though some often consider street robbery a crime of opportunity involving little to no planning, street robbers do engage in decision-making processes.²³ To implement the most appropriate interventions at the most appropriate locations and times, you should identify, in order, what factors affect their decision-making processes. The following sections describe three factors that influence a person's decision to commit street robbery, and the acronym **CAP** summarizes them.

Cash needs. The immediate need for cash is a major reason why people rob. For instance, 80 out of 81 St. Louis (Missouri) street robbers claimed their immediate need for cash was a primary reason for committing the crime.²⁴ Street robbery is a quick way for some to get the cash needed to purchase items related to success or status in street cultures (e.g., drugs, alcohol, fashionable clothing, jewelry,



and electronics). If victims do not have cash on hand, robbers can take and sell other items to meet cash needs.

Attack methods. The ability to use certain attack methods in particular settings might also affect a person's decision to commit street robbery. Street robbers use four main attack methods: confrontations, cons, blitzes, and snatch-thefts.²⁵ Offenders use some tactics more frequently. For example, confrontations were most common in one U.K. study (used in 37% of robberies), followed by blitzes (25%), cons (22%), and snatch-thefts (14%). These methods are not mutually exclusive and can change during the course of the robbery. Each attack method is described below.

CONFRONTATIONS. The offender demands property or possessions at the moment of contact with the victim. The offender will usually use verbal commands to gain compliance (e.g., "Give me your money"). Violence might follow if the victim does not comply.

BLITZES. The offender uses violence first to gain control over the victim (i.e., establish "who is in charge"). The actual robbery occurs after the offender immobilizes the victim.

CONS. The offender uses a distraction to catch the victim off guard. For example, an offender might ask someone for the time or directions before attacking. Using a legitimate distraction enables the robber to gain contact with the victim without causing alarm.

SNATCH-THEFTS. This tactic occurs very quickly. No verbal communication occurs between the offender and the victim before the robbery. The offender typically grabs visible property (e.g., purses and cell phones), then escapes. U.S. snatch-thefts are often combined with pickpocketing in official statistics, making it difficult to determine its true prevalence and incidence.²⁶ In fact, a snatch-theft might be officially counted only if the victim is injured, even if the robber uses force not resulting in injury. This issue has important implications for problem analysis because crimes identified as "street thefts" are actually street robberies.



Planning. Street robberies appear tactically simple and quickly completed, but they are seldom completely unplanned. Robbers learn which tactics work in what situations based on prior experience. So what might appear as an impulsive act could be based on a plan developed from prior experience. Immediate circumstances might also affect planning. For example, a street robber might plan target selection based on the availability of weapons and accomplices. The idea is that offenders use basic planning to overcome some of the situational challenges of street robbery. Therefore, police could prevent street robbery by addressing certain situational factors. This guide's response section addresses some of these opportunity-reducing strategies.

Victims

Victim demographics are informative, but it is vital to understand how they relate to routine activities and risk. Finding that minorities have a heightened risk of street robbery in your community is helpful only as a first step. You still have to discover *why*. Perhaps the minorities are undocumented workers whom offenders rob because the victims often work in unfamiliar neighborhoods, carry cash and won't report the crime to the police. This scenario shows how linking demographics to routines could reveal intervention points that would otherwise have gone unnoticed by examining demographics alone. Demographic information also identifies less-promising responses. Property-marking for cell phones and MP3 players, for instance, might not reduce street robberies in areas where most victims are senior citizens who carry cash but not electronic gadgets.

For prevention purposes, it is useful to look at victims from the robber's perspective. Five characteristics of potential victims appear particularly critical, and the acronym **VALUE** summarizes them.

Vulnerable. Offenders prefer targets they can intimidate, subdue or overpower. For example, senior citizens or those unlikely to report their victimization to the police (e.g., drug users,



prostitutes and illegal immigrants) might appear particularly vulnerable. Some targets, however, might be less vulnerable than initially perceived and able to defend themselves from an attack. In fact, using protective measures to resist robbery helped over half of U.S. victims in 2006, while aggravating the incident in less than 8 percent of cases.²⁷

Attractive. Target attractiveness is in the eye of the robber. Therefore, attractiveness is not universal. Some robbers might be particularly attracted to people carrying a CRAVED item. Other robbers, however, might associate attractiveness with less tangible features and prefer attacking people of a particular sex, racial, or ethnic group.

Lacking awareness. Street robbers could perceive people who are distracted (e.g., using a cell phone, drunk, and/or unfamiliar with their surroundings) as easier to approach and overpower.

Uncomplicated. Offenders probably consider the ease of approaching targets. A potential target seen at a distance is likely less interesting than one nearby. How complex the robber perceives completing the robbery to be depends on the form of attack (confrontation, blitz, con, or snatch-theft) the robber usually uses.

Escapable. Offenders probably consider the ease of fleeing from targets. Robbers might altogether avoid targets they believe will chase them or use blitzes to disable them physically. Robbers might care less about escaping when some targets (e.g., senior citizens and drunken people) appear unlikely to chase or resist them. In this case, robbers might use a confrontation, a con or a snatch-theft because they don't think they have to immobilize the target.

Though considered separately, offenders probably consider VALUE as a package rather than a checklist. From a prevention perspective, however, VALUE can reveal potential countermeasures to protect possible victims.



Locations

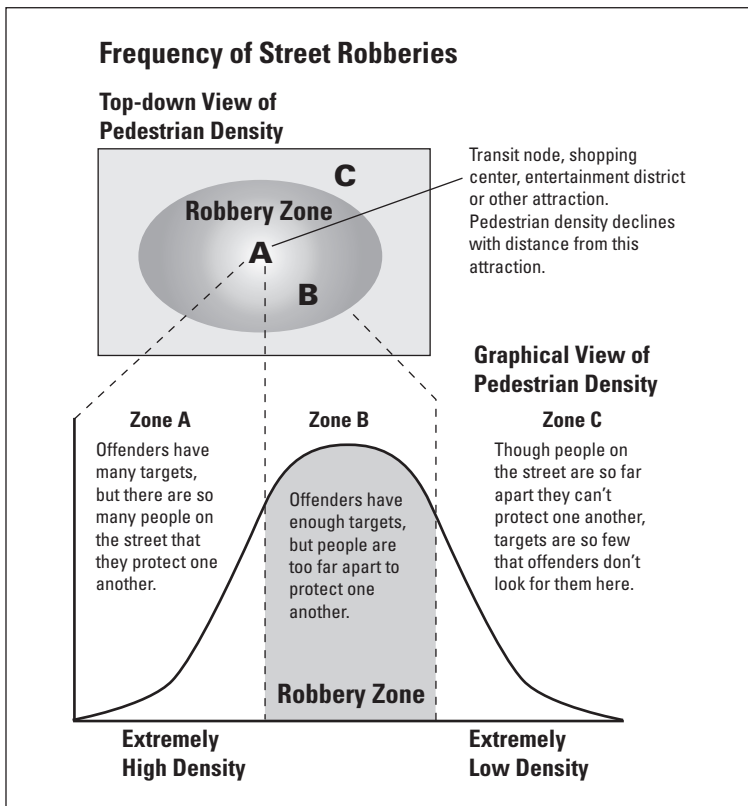
Street robbers prefer specific locations. Often, situational features make some locations appear more attractive or suitable for committing street robbery. Offenders might consider the type of location and the characteristics and routines of the people there. Furthermore, offenders prefer locations where they can blend in with the natural “flow” and easily escape.²⁸

Overall, offenders’ journey to crime is relatively short and usually overlaps with their route to and from home.²⁹ Some offenders lack transportation and are limited to robbing at locations within walking distance.³⁰ Furthermore, street robbers lack information and familiarity with locations as distance increases from their homes.³¹ In general, younger robbers travel shorter distances than older robbers, but differences in travel distance depend on local situations (e.g., public transportation choices and street layouts).³² Finally, some street robbers prefer locations near places where they can quickly resell stolen property or buy drugs.

Pedestrian volume also influences where street robberies occur. Figure 2 illustrates the relationship between street pedestrian density and robbery: as a person moves from a center of high pedestrian activity, the number of people on the street declines. Many targets are near the center of activity, but so are high guardianship levels. Far from the center, guardianship is nearly absent, but targets are also scarce. In between these extremes, there are some robbery targets and relatively little guardianship: this is the robbery zone. The size and location of the robbery zone will vary by time of day and other routine schedules. A transit node at rush hour will push the robbery zone away because of the commuter influx. Late at night, the robbery zone may encroach on the transit node. At other times, it may disappear altogether if there are so few targets around that robbers ignore the area.



Figure 2. Pedestrian Density and Street Robberies.



We can summarize robbery offenders' ideal locations with the acronym **NEAR**. Robbers are more attracted to small areas that fit these characteristics.

Natural guardianship. As mentioned, dense pedestrian and vehicle traffic increase guardianship and increase the risks for street robbers, so they prefer areas where targets are relatively unguarded. Areas with dense pedestrian and vehicle traffic, however, could thwart detection by helping offenders blend into the environment after the robbery. However, robbers may select quicker and less-obvious attack modes in dense pedestrian areas compared with less-dense areas.



Escape routes. Not only do robbers need to consider their ability to escape from a victim, but also they want routes that provide a quick escape from the crime scene.

Area familiarity. Robbers prefer familiar areas over unfamiliar areas. Being familiar with an area facilitates planning decisions and escape strategies. Familiarity also makes it easier to predict the routines of targets, guardians and police.

Resale opportunities for stolen goods. Robbers who steal noncash items for resale want to get cash and quickly dispose of evidence of the crime. Thus, robbers consider areas close to resale opportunities more desirable than areas farther away. When robbers steal only cash, they don't fear getting caught as much.

Routines

Routines influence robbery-timing patterns because routines bring robbers and targets together at locations, or they separate robbers from targets. Disruptions to routines can also influence robbery patterns. Understanding routines and disruptions is critical for understanding temporal robbery patterns. Many types of routines can influence robbery patterns. Here, we list only some of the most common. Routines vary from city to city and neighborhood to neighborhood because some areas have special routines that others don't. We use the acronym **SHADE** to summarize some of the routines that can influence street robbery.

Special events. Special events, like sports games, festivals and marathons, draw a lot of nonresidents to unfamiliar areas. Visitors might inadvertently make decisions that increase their risk of victimization (e.g., parking in a high-crime area). Event-goers also have several characteristics that make them attractive robbery targets: some drink and become less aware of their immediate surroundings, many stay out later than usual, and they likely have cash or other CRAVED items. Finally, police might close normal travel routes to accommodate event traffic. Some pedestrians might take less-familiar and riskier routes.



Holidays. Certain holidays [e.g., Black Friday (the day after Thanksgiving, which is the busiest shopping day of the year in the United States)] increase the availability of victims in public with cash, presents and other CRAVED items. Victims might also be more vulnerable during holidays on which they might consume larger amounts of alcohol, such as New Year's Eve and the United States' St. Patrick's Day, Fourth of July and Memorial Day.

§We've taken this example from a 2006 Downtown Cincinnati Inc. Safe/Clean meeting.

Annual routines. The beginning of the school year increases the number of CRAVED³³ products (e.g., new clothes and laptop computers) and new students unfamiliar with places and routes near school buildings. Holiday breaks may also influence robbery patterns, either by removing students from robbery-prone areas, or by shifting their activities from relatively safe to relatively unsafe areas.

The timing of the school year also has implications for street robbery in college towns or areas with universities for the reasons mentioned above. In addition, events tied directly to the beginning of school, such as homecoming weekend, could draw large crowds of students, parents and other patrons to high-risk areas. Robbers might also target college students who go out at night or use drugs and alcohol throughout the school year. Working with campus police could shed light on the types of students most at risk and on high-risk times and locations. Other annual routines include seasonal work (e.g., landscaping and construction) and vacationing.

Disruptions to routines. Street repair and construction activity could force pedestrians off normal travel paths into unfamiliar locations. Furthermore, to save time, some pedestrians might try to avoid detours via unsafe alleys or side streets. Finally, street robbers could use construction debris as a weapon.[§]

At the same time, however, street repair and construction could reduce street robberies. For instance, offenders might avoid suitable robbery locations if construction crews are there. Furthermore, pedestrian traffic disruptions could reduce the number of potential victims in certain areas. Finally, temporary construction alters locations normally familiar to street robbers.



It might be difficult to determine if a robbery pattern results from construction because work sites frequently change. Similarly, construction may temporarily disrupt a robbery hot spot, making the underlying conditions that facilitate robberies harder to discover. Mapping street robberies before, during and after construction may provide information for the police to use to reduce robbers' opportunities during street repairs and construction.

Everyday routines. Certain everyday routines influence street robbery patterns, such as the following:

THE SCHOOL DAY (Grades K-12). Daily student routines based on the beginning and end of the school day could influence street robbery patterns (e.g., a cluster of robberies of students carrying MP3 players near a path to school between 7 a.m. and 8 a.m.).

COMMUTING PATTERNS. Morning and evening rush hours move commuters in and out of cities in a short time. How rush hours affect robbery patterns might vary from city to city and neighborhood to neighborhood because targets and natural guardianship both increase.

PAY ROUTINES. Regular payment schedules for some workers could influence street robbery patterns. Workers paid in cash daily (e.g., waitstaff and day laborers) are obvious targets as they go home. However, robbers might target even workers paid by check if they routinely cash their checks at the same time and place. In either case, the point is that a robbery problem could emerge if offenders identify certain times, days and places when specific people will have cash on hand. Thus, pay routines might influence street robberies near quick-loan stores, liquor stores, off-track betting parlors, bars, or other places commonly visited on payday.

ENTERTAINMENT ROUTINES. Entertainment districts also experience an ebb and flow of pedestrian and vehicle traffic that could influence street robbery patterns. When crowds are dense, robberies will likely occur on the periphery of entertainment zones and may peak late in the evening as people go home (see Figure 2 on page 15).



The discussion so far has shown who commits robberies (offenders) against what targets (victims), and where robberies will take place (locations) and when (routines). These situational factors might affect the specific techniques street robbers use. Table 1 shows how street robbery techniques might vary by the configuration of basic factors on the problem analysis triangle.

[§]These tactics are not mutually exclusive. For instance, though violence is a main component of blitz robberies, violence could also ensue in cons and confrontations if primary methods fail.

Table 1. Summary of Robberies.[§]

| Type of Robbery | How It Works | Works Best If... | Considerations |
|----------------------|---|---|---|
| Blitz | Offenders use immediate violence to gain control. | ...victims are isolated, and offenders can immediately physically immobilize them, using surprise. | A blitz is not useful in most crowds. Can be used when escape routes are limited. |
| Snatch-theft | Offenders spot visible items. They quickly take them without verbal demands. | ...locations are crowded, there are many escape routes and crowds impede victims and allow offenders to escape by blending into them. | This is useful for many smaller offenders who can distract the victim. Multiple offenders can hide the snatch. It does not require weapons. Offenders must look like they belong in the area. |
| Confrontation | Offenders approach victims with immediate verbal demands. Violence is possible but not necessary. | ...victims are isolated, offenders can approach them without alerting them, and offenders can use overwhelming threats. | Guns (real or fake) can substitute for the numbers and sizes of offenders. Distracted, impaired or encumbered victims are better for robbers. Victims may not have much of value. |
| Con | Offenders use distractions to make contact with victims, then rob them. | ...victims do not feel threatened by the place or offenders, and valuable items are visible and within reach. | Offender can use this method in both a crowd and in isolation. Offenders need a weapon only as a backup. |



Understanding Your Local Problem

The information provided above is a generalized description of street robbery. To understand your local street robbery problem, you must combine this general knowledge with facts that illuminate your local conditions. Carefully analyzing your local problem will help you design an effective response strategy that fits your specific needs. However, the fewer robberies you have to analyze, the more difficult it will be to diagnose your problem.

The first step in this process is identifying the specific form of street robbery affecting your community. Having identified a specific form of street robbery, the next step is analyzing its process. The process might vary from robbery problem to robbery problem. A useful approach is to divide the robbery process into four time blocks:

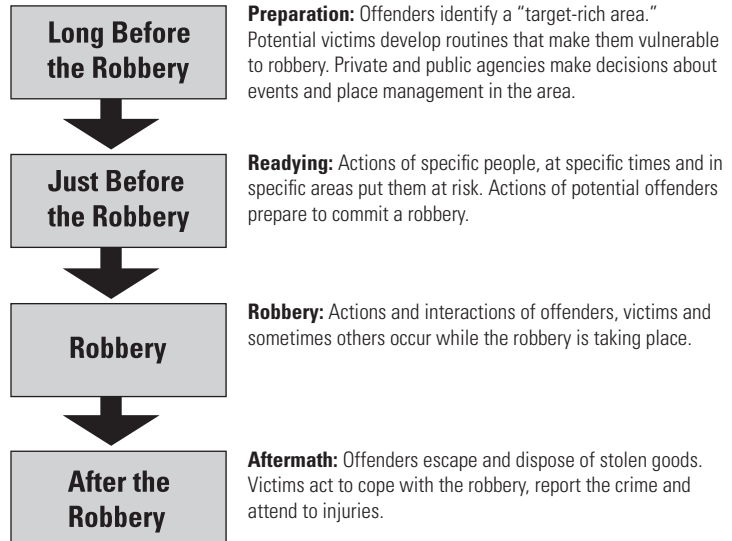
- events occurring *long before* the robbery;
- events occurring *just before* the robbery;
- events occurring *during* the robbery; and
- events occurring *after* the robbery.

Figure 3³⁴ on page 22 summarizes the process and defines the types of actions that take place at each stage. The two examples that follow make use of this process and show the differences between two types of robberies.



§ A note of caution: Some websites offering free mapping software or maps may have outdated information or have a higher rate of error than other websites offering different mapping programs.

Figure 3. Robbery Process.



Building a detailed street robbery profile could help develop a more useful process-analysis. Using alternatives to official crime statistics, like victim surveys, could prove useful. For instance, problem-solvers in England used a management information system (MIS) to identify robbery patterns in four key areas: crime locations/peak times, victim information, offender information, and property information. The MIS revealed that robbery risk was greatest for Gloucester residents aged 14 to 25 between 12 p.m. (noon) and 12 a.m. (midnight).³⁵ This detailed street robbery profile helps local agencies focus prevention efforts on certain groups during certain times. An alternative for those agencies that lack a crime analyst or large budget is to use a computer with Internet access. One way to visually display your local robbery hot spots is to use free Internet mapping sites.[§]



Stakeholders

Understanding the process of specific types of street robbery not only aids prevention, but also helps identify stakeholders who have an interest in the problem. In addition to criminal justice agencies, including police, courts and corrections, the following groups have an interest in the street robbery problem, and you should consult them when gathering information about the problem and responding to it.

- Transportation and parks departments:
 - Street robberies could reduce the use of public transportation and parks as people become afraid of robbery.
 - These departments could provide useful information for analyzing the problem, beyond using official police data alone.
- Schools:
 - Schools have an interest in protecting their students' safety. Students who feel unsafe may avoid going to school.
 - Local schools could help your agency identify at-risk students.
 - Schools are critical to developing and running robbery education/awareness campaigns if your community's children and teens are a high-risk group.
- Universities:
 - Universities have an interest in protecting their students' safety and are required by law to disclose campus crime information.[§]
 - University administrators may have information about robberies not reported to police.
 - Student organizations on college campuses have an interest in getting students involved in their own safety.

[§]When working with universities, it is important to separate the interests of students from those of the administration. Student organizations may welcome the chance to work with local police to address a serious problem, while administrators may be reluctant to admit there is a problem. Universities could vary considerably in their willingness to aid prevention efforts, often because of their lack of resources (e.g., time, staff and funding) to address the problem and their fear of being identified as a risky place for students.

**Table 2. Street Robbery Process by Time Blocks.**

| Time Frame | Victim (Student) | Offender | Location |
|--------------------|---|---|--|
| Long Before | A student (victim) moves into a new dorm room located in an unfamiliar neighborhood. | An offender needs cash. He identifies an area around the university as having many potential robbery victims and good escape routes. | A university campus |
| Just Before | The student explores the new area off campus and wanders too far away (into an unknown area). The student pulls out a cell phone to call the dorm for directions back. | The offender spots a well-dressed pedestrian, alone, who appears to have money and starts to follow the pedestrian. The possible victim seems to be lost, and the offender sees the victim pull out a cell phone. | An area surrounding the campus, unknown to the student |
| During | The victim complies with the offender's demands. | The offender uses the confrontation method to steal money and property from the victim. | An area surrounding the campus |
| After | The victim is unsure of the location, has no cell phone and is not familiar with how to get help or report the crime. The victim doesn't report the crime or reports it long after it occurs. | The offender slips down a side street and follows an escape route. | The location will vary |

Table adapted from Tilley et al. 2004

**Table 3. Street Robbery Process by Time Blocks.**

| Time Frame | Victim (Commuter) | Offender | Location |
|--------------------|--|---|---|
| Long Before | A commuter (victim) prepares to leave work for the day. | An offender needs cash. He knows commuters with valuables are getting on and off the subway. The offender can easily pick a target while legitimately hanging out at the station. | A public transportation system |
| Just Before | The commuter arrives at the subway station while listening to an MP3 player. | The offender notices a potential victim distracted by a personal music device. | The subway platform |
| During | The victim loses the MP3 player to the offender, who uses the snatch-theft method. | The offender snatches and runs with the stolen goods. | The subway platform as the victim is boarding the train |
| After | The victim notifies the authorities about the crime. | The offender tries to sell the MP3 player to a local pawnshop. | The next subway stop |

Table adapted from Tilley et al. 2004

- Local business associations:
 - Business districts have a stake in robbery prevention because they rely on a reputation of safety to stay profitable. They also have an interest in their employees' safety. Businesses in areas perceived to be unsafe might have trouble recruiting new employees.
 - Business associations might have information about robbery concerns not reported to police and about businesses that are at special risk to attract robbers (e.g., those known to allow night cash deposits).
 - Other business association stakeholders could also include real estate agencies and associations, especially those that specialize in low-cost rentals.



- Community/neighborhood associations:
 - These groups have an interest because their members are potential victims.
 - These groups could use their local knowledge to identify potential offenders, locations and other problem and potential contributing factors.
- Commerce or visitor's centers:
 - Robbery problems in business and tourist locations make it difficult for these groups to promote commerce and tourism.
 - Center staff may be able to provide information about tourist robberies reported to them, but perhaps not to police, and information about popular tourist locations and routes.
- Insurance companies:
 - Because insurance companies have a financial stake in claims for items lost through robbery, they might be apt to help develop and fund prevention efforts.
 - Insurance companies may also have information about property loss and injury treatment claims, the causes of which the victims might not have reported to police.
- Product manufacturers:
 - Manufacturers of CRAVED items have an interest in not having their products associated with robbery in the public's mind. However, they might be reluctant to work with police because they do not want customers to think using their products increases robbery risk. Nevertheless, you could persuade these companies to include "safety" information in packaging or to design products to prevent robbery. If manufacturers market CRAVED items correctly, consumers may be more willing to buy those that are "theft-resistant" or marked with "new safety features."
 - Manufacturers also have insights as to how they could design their products to discourage robbery.



- Local hospitals:
 - Hospitals have an interest in reducing injuries from robberies.
 - Hospital staff might have information about robbery-related injuries not reported to police.
- Other local government agencies (e.g., city planning departments, city councils, public health departments, and social services providers):
 - Such agencies could provide data for analyzing the problem or plan and implement responses—including those too costly for local neighborhood or resident groups.

Asking the Right Questions

Ask the following questions to gain a better understanding of your community's street robbery problem. The answers to these questions will help you develop an effective response that reduces the frequency of street robberies.

Incidents

- How many street robberies occur in your jurisdiction or area of interest?
- What percent of attempted street robberies are reported to the police, and why were those incidents not completed (e.g., did a passerby interrupt the incident)?
- Is the number of street robberies increasing or decreasing?
- What percent of street robberies involve the use of weapons?
- Are there different types of street robbery attacks (confrontations, blitzes, cons, or snatch-thefts) reported in your jurisdiction? Do these types of attacks vary by circumstances, times, types of victims, or locations?



Offenders

- What are street robbers' characteristics (e.g., age, gender and/or race)?
- Are offenders local residents, or from out of town? Where, in relation to the robbery sites, do offenders live? How do they get to their target locations?
- Are offenders members of a group, or do they work alone?
- What percent of street robberies do repeat offenders commit?
- What percent of offenders are on probation or parole at the time of their most recent robbery?
- Are offenders on drugs or alcohol at the time of the robbery?
- What types of items do robbers take (e.g., drugs, cash, credit cards, and electronic items)?
- Where do street robbers sell their stolen goods, and to whom?

Victims

- Are there noticeable demographic patterns among street robbery victims (e.g., age, sex, education level, and occupation)?
- Are there repeat robbery victims (e.g., people who work late at night)?
- Are repeat victims different from one-time victims?
- What are the victims doing right before the robbery (e.g., talking on a cell phone, listening to music, putting money away, or asking for directions)? Are they distracted due to intoxication?
- Where are victims traveling to and from when they are robbed, (e.g., a workplace, school, bar, or special event)?
- Do victims live near where offenders rob them?
- What percent of victims resists, and how do they do so? How serious are the injuries, if there are any?
- Under what circumstances are robberies thwarted either just before or during the attack?



- Are victims visibly carrying cash or CRAVED items?
- What items do robbers take from the victims?
- Do street robbers follow victims from another location, an ATM or a bus or train station?

Locations/Times

- Where do most street robberies occur? Are there clear street-robbery hot spots?
- Are robbery locations and hot spots associated with particular transportation routes, businesses, events, or other physical or social characteristics?
- When do robberies occur most frequently (e.g., day or night, day of week, and time of year)?
- Are there common safety features at high-robbery locations (e.g., proper lighting, clear visibility, surveillance cameras, and help phones)?
- Are weather conditions important? For instance, do more street robberies occur at bus stops that provide overhead cover in the winter than occur there in warmer months?

Routines

- Are street robberies common during particular special events?
- Do robberies increase around holidays?
- Are robberies associated with any annual routines?
- Are robberies associated with any daily routines?
- Are there disruptions to routines that increase or decrease street robberies?



Current and Previous Responses

- What anti-street robbery strategies have worked in the past in your community? What strategies have failed?
- What agencies have been involved in previous responses? What did they do?
- How do police typically handle street robberies (e.g., investigation)?
- Do police have a special unit designed to handle street robberies?
- What happens to street robbers after arrest (e.g., prosecution and/or sentencing)?

Measuring Your Effectiveness

Measurement allows you to determine how well your efforts have succeeded, and suggests how you might modify your responses if they are not producing the intended results. You should take measures of your problem *before* you implement responses, to determine how serious the problem is, and *after* you implement them, to determine whether they have been effective. You should take all measures in both the target area and the surrounding area (for more-detailed guidance on measuring effectiveness, see Problem-Solving Tool Guide No. 1, *Assessing Responses to Problems: An Introductory Guide for Police Problem-Solvers*). Evaluators need not have a great deal of expertise or technology. Even a small agency can use Google Maps, for example, to pinpoint and count area robberies. Larger agencies should have crime analysts to do this.

Your agency should evaluate a response on its impact on the actual problem (i.e., its so-called outcome measures). The following are potentially useful measures of the effectiveness of responses to street robbery:

- reduced overall number of street robberies in your community,
- reduced number of robberies at hot spots,
- reduced number of calls for police service for robberies,



- reduced number and severity of injuries incurred during robberies, and
- reduced cash and property losses.

Offenders might change when, where and how they rob in response to prevention efforts. Anticipating possible forms and directions of crime displacement, however, can limit its occurrence. Though displacement should always be a concern, its occurrence is not inevitable, and it is often incomplete when it does occur. In addition, your response might create a diffusion of crime prevention benefits.³⁶ For instance, reducing robberies in a hot spot might also contribute to a robbery reduction in nearby areas. (For more-detailed information on crime displacement and diffusion, see Problem-Solving Tool Guide No. 10, *Analyzing Crime Displacement and Diffusion*. For additional information on accounting for displacement and diffusion when assessing responses, see Problem-Solving Tool Guide No. 1, *Assessing Responses to Problems: An Introductory Guide for Police Problem-Solvers*). Finally, it is important to remember that the goal is to reduce robberies. Measures like arrest numbers or robbery clearances tell us only what the police did, not what they have accomplished.



Responses to the Problem of Street Robbery

Once you have analyzed your local problem and established a baseline for measuring effectiveness, you should consider possible responses to address the problem. The following responses provide a foundation of ideas for addressing your particular street robbery problem. We have drawn these responses from a variety of research studies and police reports. Several of them might reduce the number of street robberies in your community. It is critical that you tailor responses to local circumstances, and that you can justify each response based on reliable analysis of your local conditions. In most cases, an effective strategy will involve implementing several different responses. Law enforcement responses alone are seldom effective in creating sustainable reductions in street robberies, although they can, in some circumstances, produce short-term reductions.³⁷

Do not limit yourself to considering what police can do: carefully consider whether others in your community share responsibility for the problem and can help police better respond to it. In some cases, your agency may need to shift the responsibility to those who can implement more-effective responses. For example, clearing a vacant lot of overgrown trees may be the most effective response to reducing the number of hiding places for offenders. In such a case, a nonpolice agency such as the city planning department must do most of the work in carrying out the response. For more-detailed information on shifting and sharing responsibility, see Response Guide No. 3, *Shifting and Sharing Responsibility for Public Safety Problems*.

Many have written about robbery, but there are very few careful evaluations of interventions against stranger-perpetrated street robbery. Much of what we recommend here is based on information from other nonevaluative research and from informed judgments about what will likely prove effective.



General Considerations for an Effective Response Strategy

You should tailor your responses to street robbery problems as specifically as possible to the particular types of street robbery occurring in your jurisdiction. General robbery-reduction strategies are less likely to be effective.

Any comprehensive intervention should address at least two sides of the street robbery triangle: offender, victim and location (see Figure 1 on page 11). Addressing more than one side of the triangle ensures that you modify at least some of the opportunities robbers exploit. In addition, it helps build in some redundancy, so that if one part of the intervention fails, then other parts of the intervention can still operate.

A comprehensive intervention should address multiple stages in the robbery process, particularly the earlier two stages (see Figure 2 on page 16). This provides a layered approach that increases the likelihood the intervention will work.

Situational crime prevention provides multiple ways to influence offender decision-making (see www.popcenter.org).³⁸ A comprehensive intervention should take advantage of several methods to discourage offenders.

Collaborative initiatives involving multiple partner agencies and organizations are often more effective than police efforts alone. Several of the responses mentioned below require partnerships among multiple agencies. Be sure, though, that collaborations have clear leadership, goals and management.

Specific Responses to Street Robbery

We have organized the following specific responses to street robbery around the robbery triangle. We have also classified them by whether they have their influence long before, just before, during, or after a robbery. For example, providing emergency call boxes (blue lights) on campuses helps victims, but only after a robbery. By contrast, educating college students about displaying valuables influences potential victims long before a possible robbery.



Offender-Oriented Responses

1. **Deploying visible foot/vehicle directed patrols (just before, during and after).** Directed patrols appear to greatly deter street robbers and reduce street robbery (see text box below for an example). Directed patrols might work best as part of a robbery task force. The task force should be proactive, should be highly visible, should focus only on reducing street robberies, and should not handle service calls unrelated to robbery. You should use detailed crime analysis to station patrols at robbery hot spots and hot times. Directed patrols should be just one part of a larger initiative that focuses on other street-robbery aspects. For example, you might combine directed foot patrols with a robbery awareness program, a media campaign covering the patrols and the installation of CCTV cameras. Finally, you should not consider crackdown techniques, like directed patrols, a long-term strategy because these responses' impact is often temporary (see Response Guide No. 1, *The Benefits and Consequences of Police Crackdowns*).

Hull's Anti-Robbery Patrols

Researchers analyzed high-visibility foot patrols in the city of Hull between April 2000 and March 2001. These high-visibility patrols consisted of 12 additional public-order foot patrol officers at specific high-robbery times (Friday and Saturday nights). One of the purposes of these high-visibility patrols was to deter potential offenders. Compared with the previous year, robbery fell by 16 percent during the year of the initiative. Further, a 5 percent increase occurred across the police force and a 15 percent increase occurred in the United Kingdom as a whole for the same period. Hull police used this type of directed patrol to keep the city center safe in general.

Source: Jones B. and Tilley N., 2004.



2. **Using covert directed patrols.** In some cases, it is possible to use both covert (i.e., “not openly shown”) directed patrols and overt directed patrols to deter *and* catch offenders. U.K. police combined these strategies to reduce robbery at underground stations.³⁹ First, London’s Metropolitan Police deployed highly visible uniformed officers in the streets surrounding the target area to deter potential offenders. Second, plainclothes officers targeted observed known robbery suspects and responded to robberies as they occurred. Overall, this strategy increased the number of people charged with street robbery by 30 percent after one year.⁴⁰

3. **Using intelligence to target repeat robbers (long before).** Your agency can gather intelligence to reduce street robbery in several ways. First, your agency could work with other organizations to build “intelligence databases” to learn more about repeat street robbers and their patterns. Ideal databases might include arrest data, probation and parole information, surveillance and CCTV footage, and hot-spot maps. Operation Eagle Eye,⁴¹ a U.K. robbery reduction strategy, used an intelligence database called “CRIMINT.” The database included several layers of data used to create suspect and target profiles. In addition, CRIMINT could map offenders’ robberies and play surveillance footage. You need to consider the additional training officers will need to use intelligence databases. Your agency could work with a local IT organization to create a database and train users. However, to avoid the potential for civil liability, check with your legal team before using this response.

Second, you could also gather street robbery intelligence by examining other robbery-related crimes.⁴² For instance, investigations into theft or drug rings could reveal useful information about street robbery.

Third, you could pay informants to gather intelligence on offenders not yet known to police, popular target search areas, and products that robbers seek (such as MP3 players and



mobile phones).⁴³ Informants could also help your agency identify repeat robbers through network analysis (e.g., diagrams of offender associations). Network analysis could also reveal the individuals or groups robbers use to dispose of stolen items.⁴⁴

4. **Disrupting stolen goods markets (long before).** Police do not usually consider disrupting stolen goods markets as a way to reduce street robbery.⁴⁵ This strategy, however, may make sense when street robbers often take valuable noncash items. Street robbers have several options for handling stolen goods: they can sell the items to known fences or friends, use the items themselves, trade the items for drugs, or give the items away.⁴⁶ Depending on offenders' levels of sophistication, they may also use the Internet to sell stolen goods (e.g., via eBay and Craigslist). Your agency could work with local business owners, neighborhood groups, residents, or informants familiar with the community to identify potential groups or networks related to these transactions.⁴⁷

Your agency could also increase the risks and reduce the rewards of selling stolen items by focusing investigative attention on transporting, storing or selling them. Furthermore, you could work with consumers to register/mark valuable items to reduce the rewards of using stolen goods markets. For instance, U.K. police and mobile phone companies have teamed up to address stolen mobile phones. When someone reports a registered phone as stolen, the phone company blocks it within 48 hours, making it unusable. They also launched a marketing campaign to inform the public about this program. See Problem-Specific Guide No. 57 *Stolen Goods Markets*, for further information.

5. **Publishing photos of known robbers (long before).** This strategy might deter repeat robbers if police place photos in areas where robbers spend a lot of time. Posting photos would probably work best if you put them on *robbery-specific* "WANTED" posters (rather than posters including various crime types). Your agency should pursue legal advice before publishing offender photos.



6. **Improving robber identification methods (after).** Agencies are no longer limited to relying on stationary CCTV cameras to identify offenders. Technology advances have improved robber identification. Some innovative identification methods include the following.
 - *PCFax*:⁴⁸ PCFax is a computerized system that scans and transmits printable body maps/images.
 - *DNA and forensic kits*: Officers who arrive first at robbery scenes use these tools to collect any contact materials while they are still fresh.⁴⁹
 - *Mobile robbery units*: These vehicles pick up victims and process the scene immediately. Police drive victims around the area, and they provide information on-site.
 - *Facial recognition systems*: The U.K.'s Metropolitan Police use a system called "Video Sentry." They placed cameras in fixed locations near hot spots.
 - *Mobile CCTV*: You could install this system in an unmarked vehicle placed at different locations or in mobile units. Compared with the previous years, over six months this system reduced street robbery by 20 percent in one hot spot.⁵⁰ Police have also used mobile CCTV for intelligence-gathering and prosecution evidence. In fact, witnesses can better positively identify offenders from video than from lineups.⁵¹

7. **Diverting potential offenders to legitimate activities (long before).** Some options include drug/alcohol counseling, employment services, education, and purposeful activity (e.g., youth groups and athletic programs) for young offenders. You could use post-arrest information to determine the best diversion tactic for specific offenders. One street robbery program in England⁵² used this information and found that 85 percent of offenders robbed to support drug addictions.



Accordingly, police created the Drug Arrest Referral Scheme (DARS) with a drug counselor (DARS employee).⁵³ Providing employment services could also divert potential offenders. One study, however, revealed that only one-third offenders said they would stop robbing if given a decent job.⁵⁴

Your agency could also work with local schools to establish programs for young offenders who “rob out of boredom” or as part of a gang initiation. Furthermore, your agency could work with parks and recreation departments to develop additional after-school activities to divert young offenders.

§This strategy of getting buy-in from prosecutors and judges is similar to the Cincinnati Initiative To Reduce Violence and other Operation Ceasefire initiatives.

8. **Using probation and parole information to target repeat offenders (long before).** Probation and parole officers can notify your agency when detention centers release repeat robbers into the community. You can use this information to launch other offender-based strategies (e.g., directed patrols, covert operations and published offender photos) that hinge on knowing repeat offenders’ whereabouts. You could also use probation and parole information to process repeat robbers after arrest. For instance, you could flag an offender’s record as “high priority” so prosecutors and judges know the offender is a repeat robber and part of a robbery reduction strategy.⁵⁵ §
9. **Removing robbery “tools” (long before).** Offenders commonly use weapons as a “tool” in many street robberies. Street robbers, however, can’t always get real guns and opt for fake or replica guns. If this is part of your community’s street robbery problem, your agency could work with local retailers to stop or regulate the sale of authentic-looking toy guns. One Minneapolis group asked a local K-Mart to stop selling replica guns offenders used in some street robberies. In response to publicity and the Minneapolis (Minnesota) Police Department’s request, K-Mart stopped selling the fake guns.⁵⁶ To avoid losing profits, some retailers might resist this strategy.



Victim-Oriented Responses

10. **Launching a robbery awareness campaign (long before).**

Some pedestrians might not accurately perceive the risk of street robbery. You could develop and hold information seminars reminding people to keep possessions well hidden and to remain alert to their surroundings (e.g., avoid speaking on cell phones and listening to MP3 players outdoors). In addition, your agency could create a website with interactive maps showing safe routes and destinations.

Your campaign could also enlist local media. Police in England, for instance, worked with radio stations to broadcast crime-related interviews.⁵⁷ These interviews enabled concerned citizens to speak with police about local crime issues. The same agency also worked with the local government council to install crime prevention displays at recreation places and libraries. Finally, they distributed safety leaflets among residents and held Community Safety Days to promote robbery awareness and safe behavior.⁵⁸

Awareness campaigns succeed more when they target people directly at risk of the problem (see Response Guide No. 5, *Crime Prevention Publicity Campaigns*). For instance, if the problem involves a particular group's routines, then the campaign should focus on that group and not on other groups. General public-safety campaigns targeting the larger community prove generally ineffective, as the problem doesn't affect most people, and the few whom the problem *does* affect overlook the message before they need to apply it.

11. **Providing safe transportation (long before).** Providing safe and easily accessible transportation from entertainment districts, bars or special events can reduce the number of suitable targets on the street at peak robbery times and days.



The University of Cincinnati (UC), for instance, offers a shuttle service that picks up and drops off students from nearby entertainment venues. UC also provides an escort service for students walking to and from class or to other on- and off-campus destinations.⁵⁹ Furthermore, many cities provide reduced-price or free transportation during holiday celebrations when normally safe areas could be riskier. This strategy helps remove more vulnerable, and potentially drunken, people from the streets.

12. **Improving how victims report robberies (after).** The faster someone reports a robbery to your agency, the faster your agency can respond, and the better your chances are of collecting useful evidence, identifying suspects and uncovering current offender information.⁶⁰ Using mobile robbery units improves information collection and encourages quicker reporting. When using this response, you must ensure that dispatchers immediately inform patrolling officers of the street crimes victims report to local stations, which dispatchers often don't do.⁶¹

Making reporting procedures easy for victims also can improve the likelihood of victims' reporting their victimization.

Operation Eagle Eye used several tactics to improve victims' willingness to report robberies by encouraging involvement and providing help. First, the program automatically referred all robbery victims to a victim support group. Second, police advised victims of any developments in the investigation. (This tactic may benefit those areas where police-community relations are weak. Community members may be more willing to provide information if they believe police will follow through with a robbery report.) Police allowed victims to use pseudonyms when giving accounts to ensure anonymity in reporting and protection from retaliation. Finally, encouraging victims to report crimes committed against them will help you collect the data needed to analyze specific robbery problems. This step can provide your agency with a clearer picture of when, where and how robberies occur in your community.



13. **Reducing target attractiveness (just before).** Your agency could deal with “hot products” (e.g., CRAVED items) that make some people more attractive to street robbers. The Home Office, for instance, has launched several campaigns to reduce thefts from youth by encouraging them to keep cell phones concealed. For example, MP3 players may come with white or other brightly colored leads, making users obvious to potential robbers. Using a dark-colored lead, however, might reduce a target’s attractiveness by preventing offenders from detecting the device from a distance.⁶² Concealing CRAVED items to reduce target attractiveness could also increase robbers’ efforts.⁶³
14. **Reducing intoxication in high-risk areas (long before and just before).** Street robbers might perceive drunken people as lacking awareness, making them more vulnerable to attack. Therefore, this response is likely most appropriate in “night life” areas where people drink. Your agency could work with entertainment venues and bars to better monitor serving practices. For instance, you could encourage bar staff to stop serving obviously drunken patrons. Or, like in the Bristol Anti-Robbery Strategy, local council members could arrange taxi and night bus services from bars to reduce the risk of student robbery (see response No. 11).⁶⁴
15. **Rewarding awareness and safety (long before).** You could improve participation in robbery interventions by providing incentives beyond personal safety. In England, for example, anti-robbery advice cards were printed with coupons on the back. These cards were a useful tool for encouraging students to participate in their own safety. Incentives could include discounts at local hangouts or on textbooks.⁶⁵ People could also earn coupons after completing a robbery education program. Regardless of the incentive, the idea is to make receiving robbery safety information attractive.
16. **Redesigning certain CRAVED items (long before).** Since robbers often take cash or other items not always observable before an attack, marking property might do little to reduce their anticipated rewards. However, when robbers steal items



for personal use or resale, manufacturers could design Internet-dependent electronic items to stop working or become less functional once reported stolen. For example, robbers might not steal MP3 players knowing they can't connect the devices online or upload new files. This strategy would work best if people knew certain items had security enhancements. Redesigning products, however, is likely costly for manufacturers and suggests that owning their products is risky.

§ For more information on TRIAD branches, see www.kanecountytriad.com/index.html.

17. **Making senior citizens less vulnerable.** If offenders disproportionately rob your community's senior citizens, you could tailor responses specific to their needs. Your agency could work with senior citizen groups in your community. For example, numerous branches of the TRIAD program currently exist throughout the United States. The National Sheriff's Association, the International Association of Chiefs of Police and the American Association of Retired Persons developed TRIAD to increase awareness of crimes against senior citizens, sponsor crime safety programs and connect senior citizens with local law enforcement. The website for the Central Kane County, IL, TRIAD branch, for instance, provides information about transportation services and posts dates for upcoming personal safety events. Improving transportation might help senior citizens avoid having to walk through high-risk areas, while safety events could provide them with tips for reducing their risk of robbery.[§]
18. **Making immigrants less vulnerable.** Robbers often target immigrants because they carry a lot of cash instead of depositing it into a bank account. Your agency could work with community social and cultural agencies to educate and help immigrants so they can avoid robbery. For example, when robberies of the Charlotte, NC, Hispanic population increased, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department created the International Relations Unit. This multiagency unit held monthly meetings (with Spanish speakers) with the Hispanic community and built relationships between the financial and Hispanic communities, while also educating Hispanics with crime prevention literature.⁶⁶



Location-Oriented Responses

19. **Removing hiding spots (long before and after).** You might find it useful to work with city planners and sanitation services to remove overgrowth and trash from vacant lots that could provide cover to street robbers. Similarly, your agency could work with building inspectors to either demolish or board up abandoned buildings that could provide cover to an offender before and after a robbery. Certain legitimate locations, such as parks, might also provide hiding spots for street robbers. Therefore, your agency could work with the parks department to either close access to high-risk routes or close the park during peak robbery times and days. See Problem-Specific Guide No. 9, *Dealing With Crime and Disorder in Urban Parks*.
20. **Increasing lighting at high-risk sites (long before).** Increasing lighting could decrease the risk of street robbery. Improved lighting was one part of the Home Office's Safer Cities Program.⁶⁷ Specifically, police used improved lighting in conjunction with CCTV and target-hardening measures (e.g., access control). The lighting intervention included controlling lights via infrared heat detectors and using stationary lights on businesses and homes. No one has yet evaluated the Safer Cities Program. This response is more likely to be effective if your agency can install lighting at street robbery hot spots that are especially risky at night. Finally, if lights are already present at such areas, you should have their brightness assessed and increased, if needed. Researchers have conducted other studies of lighting and crime in parking garages, residential neighborhoods and markets, for example. However, the majority of these studies often examine "personal or property crimes," rather than focus specifically on street robbery.⁶⁸ See Response Guide No. 8, on *Improving Street Lighting To Reduce Crime in Residential Areas*, for further information.
21. **Installing CCTV (long before and after).** Installing CCTV to reduce crime is most promising if you can identify reliable hot spots.⁶⁹ Once you identify them, you should regularly



analyze them (either daily or weekly) to assess any changes at those locations.⁷⁰ You could also improve your CCTV strategy by adding signs at the locations notifying the public to be on guard and warning would-be offenders that cameras are in use.⁷¹ Your agency might need to work with place managers to install CCTV if offenders are robbing people going to and from their establishments. Using CCTV to reduce street robberies might be challenging because offenses occur in public (e.g., on the street).

CCTV might prevent street robbery long before a potential offense, but you can also use to address a robbery's aftermath. For instance, police could use CCTV footage as evidence in street robbery cases.⁷² Furthermore, local police and media could use images to identify, locate and apprehend street robbers. See Response Guide No. 4, *Video Surveillance of Public Places*, for further information.

22. **Increasing pedestrian density near risky places (long before and just before).** Recall that street robbery usually occurs in “critical-intensity zones,” where there are sufficient pedestrians to make robbery attractive, but not enough pedestrians to protect one another.⁷³ Accordingly, increasing pedestrian density might reduce street robberies because targets are better guarded and the risk of apprehension is high (this may not be true for pickpocketing). You could increase pedestrian density by rerouting pedestrian traffic during high-risk robbery times and days.
23. **Removing escape routes (long before and after).** Robbers often look for easy escape routes.⁷⁴ You could solicit city planners or place managers to increase the effort needed to escape from certain locations after committing a robbery. For example, a bar owner could install fencing around the bar's parking lot or block adjacent alleys. These obstructions might eliminate shortcuts that provide robbers with a quick and uncomplicated getaway.



24. **Increasing site-specific robbery awareness (just before).** You could use posters and billboards at high-risk locations, such as ATM machines, transportation stops and entertainment districts, to make people aware of safety near robbery hot spots. For example, U.K. police bought and posted four high-profile signs in robbery hot spots. The signs read as follows: “Robbery is a crime of concern in the city of Gloucester. For your safety and security, plain-clothed police officers and mobile CCTV cameras may be deployed in this area.”⁷⁵ Not only do such signs alert victims just before a robbery, but also they can deter potential offenders. Your agency could also encourage local bars and restaurants to provide safety information on menus or drink coasters. Increasing robbery awareness at specific sites might be less expensive and require less planning than broad education campaigns.
25. **Installing emergency call stations (just before and after).** Many colleges and universities have installed victim call stations on their campuses. These stations are equipped with emergency lights and telephones directly linked to campus police. Just before victimization, people might be able to quickly contact the police. In turn, police could identify the victim’s exact location. Therefore, call stations could deter potential robbers or help police apprehend a robber shortly after the offense. You might apply this campus strategy to your community’s robbery hot spots. Once your agency has identified high-risk locations, you could install call stations directly linked to your department.

Routine-Oriented Responses

26. **Improving special event planning (long before).** It is important for your community to consider safety when planning special holiday events, festivals or other occasions that draw large crowds. You could prevent street robberies of event-goers by routing them away from unsafe areas or providing warnings



about intoxication and robbery risk. You should provide special training on responsible serving practices at events where people serve alcohol. Finally, you could use police foot patrols or hired security officers to provide guardianship near event edges (e.g., robbery zones). Strategies that emphasize crime and safety at special events could dissuade would-be event-goers. Therefore, it might be best to publicize affirmative safety tips for event attendees rather than dire warnings about the robbery risk.

27. **Planning for holiday shopping (long before).** Retail stores and other shopping venues are usually concentrated in certain areas. Therefore, people at risk of street robbery while holiday shopping are likely restricted to a limited number of areas in your community—that is, where the stores are. Therefore, you can launch a highly directed safety strategy to protect holiday shoppers. For instance, you could post signs in a shopping area cautioning shoppers to stay alert and aware of their surroundings, money and property. While this strategy has the advantage of being confined to a very specific area (which could help reduce costs), it likely has no effect on shoppers once they leave the shopping area. For example, street robbers could target shoppers as they take gifts from their parked cars to their homes.
28. **Notifying parents just before the school year starts.** As mentioned, the beginning of the school year marks a time when many youths converge upon a specific area carrying various CRAVED items (e.g., new electronics and clothes). School administrators could notify parents (by mail or email) that robbers view these students as attractive targets. These messages should encourage parents to work with children to reduce their target attractiveness (e.g., to conceal possessions when traveling to school and map out safe routes). School administrators could apply similar strategies to reduce robberies associated with daily school routines (e.g., starting and dismissal times).



29. **Providing safe routes during construction.** Your agency could work with builder associations to plan construction detour routes through low-risk robbery areas—for example, walkways with sufficient pedestrian density and minimal escape routes. Furthermore, your agency could encourage construction firms to dispose of debris and other construction materials that prospective robbers could use as weapons.
30. **Encouraging businesses to use alternative pay methods.** Requiring employees to enroll in direct deposit programs or mailing paychecks could reduce street robberies of workers paid in cash.

Responses with Limited Effectiveness

31. **Using police decoys.** Decoy operations are another form of covert directed patrol. Decoy operations involve undercover police officers' posing as potential victims in high-robbery areas. Backup officers are positioned nearby to intervene if robbers attack the decoys. There are no reliable evaluations of whether decoy operations reduce crime, even if they produce many arrests. A major limitation of this strategy is the risk it poses to decoy officers. In addition, this type of operation can be costly and time-consuming.⁷⁶ To avoid these risks, placing decoy or “dummy” police vehicles at hot spots might deter some offenders.⁷⁷
32. **Arming potential victims.** Resistance to robbery appears to have beneficial results, on average.⁷⁸ Therefore, it is possible that arming potential victims with chemical sprays, electric shocking devices (e.g., Tasers) or guns may reduce robberies. However, the research on this topic is inconclusive, contradictory and controversial. Further, it is possible that offenders could escalate violence, making a bad situation worse. In addition, it is possible that potential victims might attack nonoffenders whom they mistakenly view as a threat.



Appendix: Summary of Responses to Street Robbery

The table below summarizes the responses to street robbery, the means by which they are intended to work, the conditions under which they should work best, and some factors you should consider before implementing a particular response. It is critical that you tailor responses to local circumstances, and that you can justify each response based on reliable analysis. In most cases, an effective strategy will involve implementing several different responses. Law enforcement responses alone are seldom effective in reducing or solving the problem.

| Response No. | Page No. | Response | How It Works | Works Best If... | Considerations |
|------------------------------------|----------|---|--|--|--|
| <i>Offender-Oriented Responses</i> | | | | | |
| 1 | 35 | Deploying visible foot/vehicle directed patrols | It increases robbers' risk of detection and apprehension by strengthening formal surveillance. | ...police use it as part of a highly visible, proactive task force. | The task force should be part of a larger initiative focusing on other aspects of street crime. |
| 2 | 36 | Using covert directed patrols | It increases robbers' risk of apprehension. | ...plainclothes officers target observed known robbery suspects and respond immediately to robberies as they occur. | Police should use covert operations in conjunction with overt directed patrols to deter and catch offenders. |
| 3 | 36 | Using intelligence to target repeat robbers | It increases the likelihood of apprehending prolific offenders. | ...police enter intelligence information into a central database with different sources, such as probation, parole and arrest records, and any surveillance or other visual data (e.g., photographs and maps). | Police may need additional training, or they may need a civilian IT professional to maintain the database. Continually working with other agencies to obtain current information (e.g., weekly or monthly updates) may be difficult to coordinate. |



| Response No. | Page No. | Response | How It Works | Works Best If... | Considerations |
|---------------------|-----------------|--|---|--|--|
| 4 | 37 | Disrupting stolen goods markets | It reduces the rewards for offenders by disrupting the networks they use to fence noncash items. | ...your agency works with local business owners, neighborhood groups, residents, or informants familiar with the community who can identify potential networks/groups related to these transactions. | Depending on the offenders' level of sophistication, your agency may need to consider Internet sites (e.g., eBay and Craigslist) as another type of network to track stolen goods. |
| 5 | 37 | Publishing photos of known robbers | It increases the risk to offenders by reducing their anonymity. | ...police post photos on robbery-specific "WANTED" posters, rather than on posters including various crime types. | You should get legal advice before publishing offender photos. |
| 6 | 38 | Improving robber identification methods | It increases the risk of identification through formal surveillance and technological improvements. | ...police use it with additional intelligence-gathering databases and informants. | Newer robbery identification methods may be costly for an agency. It may be better to work with other city agencies that have technical expertise. |
| 7 | 38 | Diverting potential offenders to legitimate activities | It removes excuses for offending (e.g., a need for cash, drug and/or alcohol addiction, lack of education, and boredom) by connecting offenders to various social services. | ...your agency works with social service agencies, schools and park and recreation departments. | Once you establish these partnerships, you should sustain them through regular meetings (e.g., monthly or quarterly). |



| Response No. | Page No. | Response | How It Works | Works Best If... | Considerations |
|----------------------------------|----------|---|---|--|--|
| 8 | 39 | Using probation and parole information to target repeat offenders | It increases the risk of detection by strengthening formal surveillance. In this case, each agency communicates with one another regarding the release, monitoring or arrest of repeat offenders. | ...each agency agrees on a schedule (e.g., daily or weekly) and a method (e.g., email) for sending updated information on repeat offenders. Each agency then alerts the others regarding their next steps. | This strategy requires that agencies share sensitive information on offenders. Therefore, the agencies should agree ahead of time on what specific information they need to transmit so they can track repeat offenders in the system. |
| 9 | 39 | Removing robbery “tools” | It increases the effort for offenders by restricting access to alternative weapons. | ...local retailers agree to regulate the sale of authentic-looking guns. | Some retailers may resist regulating these sales to avoid losing profits. |
| <i>Victim-Oriented Responses</i> | | | | | |
| 10 | 40 | Launching a robbery awareness campaign | It uses various media outlets to disseminate a prevention message. | ...awareness campaigns target the people most at risk for robbery. | Your agency may want to work with a local PR firm or university to help create a prevention campaign. |
| 11 | 40 | Providing safe transportation | It reduces the number of potential targets on the street. | ...accessible transportation is provided at reduced prices or for free at peak robbery times and places. | Your agency may want to work with your local transportation agency, taxi services and universities to coordinate transportation needs. |
| 12 | 41 | Improving how victims report robberies | It improves intelligence, which increases the likelihood of preventing and detecting offenders. | ... the reporting of robberies is fast and easy for the victim, and the victim is provided with support. | Make sure street robberies reported to local stations are immediately relayed to patrolling officers. |



| Response No. | Page No. | Response | How It Works | Works Best If... | Considerations |
|--------------|----------|--|--|--|---|
| 13 | 42 | Reducing target attractiveness | It educates potential targets about the value of concealing CRAVED items when in public, which makes targets less attractive to offenders. | ...campaigns are aimed at high-risk targets most likely to carry CRAVED items in public (e.g., young adults, students and tourists). | You should be sensitive when placing safety education materials in robbery hot spots. For example, entertainment venues do not want visitors to think the area is unsafe. |
| 14 | 42 | Reducing intoxication in high-risk areas | It reduces the chances of a drunken person becoming a street robbery target. | ...police work with entertainment venues and bars to better monitor serving practices. | Entertainment venues, bars and tourist areas may be more willing to participate or train bar staff if incentives are involved (e.g., recognition in a travel brochure). |
| 15 | 42 | Rewarding awareness and safety | It makes receiving safety information attractive to potential targets. | ...police provide coupons or discounts to people who attend a safety education program. | Your agency should contact those merchants who have high-risk targets as customers and are most likely to work out a coupon or discount program. |
| 16 | 42 | Redesigning certain CRAVED items | It reduces the functionality of highly desired products after a robbery. | ...it is well known that certain products contain security enhancements. | Redesigning products may be costly for manufacturers. Also, consumers might avoid buying products perceived as risky to own. |



| Response No. | Page No. | Response | How It Works | Works Best If... | Considerations |
|------------------------------------|----------|--|---|---|---|
| 17 | 43 | Making senior citizens less vulnerable | It reduces their risk of victimization. | ...special circumstances put senior citizens at particular risk. | You need to examine carefully senior citizens' particular needs, which might be difficult for your agency if there are no community senior citizen groups (e.g., TRIAD) with which to work. |
| 18 | 43 | Making immigrants less vulnerable | It reduces their risk of victimization. | ... there are native-language speakers available to communicate with immigrants. | Your community may not have cultural or social services that specifically address immigrants' needs. |
| <i>Location-Oriented Responses</i> | | | | | |
| 19 | 44 | Removing hiding spots | It increases the risk of detection by removing robbers' cover before and after an attack. | ...your agency works with building inspectors, park districts and other agencies with the authority to make changes to public landscape. Also, it works best against snatch robbers needing cover for surprise attacks. | Business districts, park districts and local residents might resist the removal of attractive trees and shrubbery. Also, demolishing abandoned buildings is costly. |
| 20 | 44 | Increasing lighting at high-risk sites | It increases offenders' risk of detection. | ...workers install lighting in or near areas especially risky at night. | Installing and maintaining lights could be costly. Also, lights could help robbers spot items to snatch from a victim. |



| Response No. | Page No. | Response | How It Works | Works Best If... | Considerations |
|--------------|----------|---|--|--|--|
| 21 | 44 | Installing CCTV | It increases offenders' risk of detection through continuous guardianship. | ...police can identify reliable hot spots. | Stationary CCTV systems might be ineffective if robbery displaces to nearby areas. |
| 22 | 45 | Increasing pedestrian density near risky places | It increases the offenders' risk of detection and better protects potential victims. | ...police implement their strategy in critical-intensity robbery zones. | Rerouting pedestrian traffic could result in pedestrian injuries and fatalities. |
| 23 | 45 | Removing escape routes | It increases the effort offenders need to make to escape from certain locations after a robbery. | ...robbery hot spots cluster near areas with multiple shortcuts. | Robbers might use weapons to immobilize victims, making a quick escape less important. |
| 24 | 46 | Increasing site-specific robbery awareness | It increases the effort robbery entails by raising public awareness. | ...police post awareness materials in high-risk areas and gear them toward at-risk groups. | Posting robbery materials in business and entertainment districts could increase fear among employees and patrons. This would also be true for places such as high-rise apartments, public housing and public parking garages. |
| 25 | 46 | Installing emergency call stations | It increases the likelihood of quickly apprehending suspects. | ...call stations are installed near high-risk areas and directly linked to local police. | False alarms could waste police resources. Immobile call stations are ineffective if spatial robbery patterns change. |



| Response No. | Page No. | Response | How It Works | Works Best If... | Considerations |
|-----------------------------------|----------|---|--|--|--|
| <i>Routine-Oriented Responses</i> | | | | | |
| 26 | 46 | Improving special event planning | It reduces robbery risks. | ...most event-goers are from out of town and unfamiliar with the local area, or are drinking alcohol and less alert to their immediate surroundings. | Emphasizing crime and safety at special events could dissuade would-be event goers, so it is important to publicize safety tips rather than dire warnings. |
| 27 | 47 | Planning for holiday shopping | It reduces the attractiveness of clusters of potential targets confined to a very specific area. | ...robberies occur at shopping centers or in their parking areas. | This strategy does not protect shoppers as they take gifts from their cars to their homes. |
| 28 | 47 | Notifying parents just before the school year starts | It reduces the attractiveness of a specific group of targets at a specific time. | ...parents are willing to relay safety information to children and work with them to increase their personal safety. | Schools might be hesitant to call too much attention to robbery risks on or near school grounds. |
| 29 | 48 | Providing safe routes during construction | It ensures that pedestrians are not rerouted to isolated areas with escape routes for robbers. | ...your agency works with building companies to monitor routes as work sites change. | Construction sites are temporary and frequently change; changing conditions could make monitoring difficult. |
| 30 | 48 | Encouraging businesses to use alternative pay methods | It reduces the rewards of robbery by eliminating cash payments to employees. | ...your community's robbery problem involves workers traditionally paid in cash (e.g., waitstaff and day laborers). | Electronic deposits or mailed checks could upset employees used to receiving cash payments. |



| Response No. | Page No. | Response | How It Works | Works Best If... | Considerations |
|---|-----------------|--------------------------|---|---|--|
| <i>Responses with Limited Effectiveness</i> | | | | | |
| 31 | 48 | Using police decoys | It increases offenders' risk of apprehension. | ...the goal is to increase short-term arrests of street robbers. | There is little evidence that using decoys has lasting effects. |
| 32 | 48 | Arming potential victims | It deters offenders. | ...offenders perceive an increased risk and they can't escalate violence. | Its effectiveness is unknown and controversial. There is the potential of greater harm through escalation. |



Endnotes

- ¹ FBI (2006).
- ² Curran et al. (2005); Holt and Spencer (2005).
- ³ U.S. Department of Justice (2007).
- ⁴ U.S. Department of Justice (2007).
- ⁵ U.S. Department of Justice (2007); Smith (2003).
- ⁶ U.S. Department of Justice (2007).
- ⁷ Wright and Decker (1997).
- ⁸ Klaus (2000).
- ⁹ Tilley et al. (2004).
- ¹⁰ Tilley et al. (2004).
- ¹¹ Cincinnati Police Department (2006, 2005).
- ¹² Pratt (1980).
- ¹³ U.S. Department of Justice (2005).
- ¹⁴ U.S. Department of Justice (2005).
- ¹⁵ Roman and Chalfin (2007).
- ¹⁶ Clarke (1999).
- ¹⁷ Clarke (1999).
- ¹⁸ Gale and Coupe (2005); Feeney (1986).
- ¹⁹ Cook (2009).
- ²⁰ Cook (2009).
- ²¹ Cook (1987).
- ²² Cook (1987).
- ²³ Wright and Decker (1997).
- ²⁴ Jacobs and Wright (1999).
- ²⁵ Smith (2003).
- ²⁶ Smith (2003).
- ²⁷ “Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics Online” (2006).



- ²⁸ Brantingham and Brantingham (1993).
- ²⁹ Brantingham and Brantingham (1981).
- ³⁰ Jacobs and Wright (1999).
- ³¹ Brantingham and Brantingham (1981); Eck (1993).
- ³² Wiles and Costello (2000).
- ³³ Clarke (1999).
- ³⁴ Adapted from Jacobs and Wright (1999).
- ³⁵ Gloucestershire Constabulary (2003).
- ³⁶ Clarke and Weisburd (1994).
- ³⁷ Kane (2006).
- ³⁸ Also see Eck and Clarke (2003).
- ³⁹ Burney (1990).
- ⁴⁰ Burney (1990).
- ⁴¹ Stockdale and Gresham (1998).
- ⁴² Burrows et al. (2003).
- ⁴³ Stockdale and Gresham (1998).
- ⁴⁴ Burrows et al. (2003).
- ⁴⁵ Burrows et al. (2003).
- ⁴⁶ Sutton (1998).
- ⁴⁷ Sutton (1998); Schneider (2005).
- ⁴⁸ Stockdale and Gresham (1998).
- ⁴⁹ Burrows et al. (2003).
- ⁵⁰ Burrows et al. (2003).
- ⁵¹ Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (2003).
- ⁵² Gloucestershire Constabulary (2003).
- ⁵³ Gloucestershire Constabulary (2003).
- ⁵⁴ Wright and Decker (1997).
- ⁵⁵ Gloucestershire Constabulary (2003).



- ⁵⁶ Lowe (2008).
- ⁵⁷ Gloucestershire Constabulary (2003).
- ⁵⁸ Gloucestershire Constabulary (2003).
- ⁵⁹ University of Cincinnati Public Safety Division (2009).
www.uc.edu/pubsafety/police_services/
- ⁶⁰ Burrows et al. (2003).
- ⁶¹ Burrows et al. (2003).
- ⁶² Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (2003); "BBC News" (2005); Clarke (1997, 1995); Home Office (2009)
www.homeoffice.gov.uk/crime-victims/reducing-crime/robbery/.
- ⁶³ Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (2003).
- ⁶⁴ Thomas (2001).
- ⁶⁵ Thomas (2001).
- ⁶⁶ Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department (2002).
- ⁶⁷ Ramsay and Newton (1991).
- ⁶⁸ See Farrington and Welsh (2007, 2002); Welsh and Farrington (2006).
- ⁶⁹ Sherman, Gartin and Buerger (1989).
- ⁷⁰ Greater Manchester Police, Bury Police Station (2005).
- ⁷¹ Gloucestershire Constabulary (2003).
- ⁷² Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (2003).
- ⁷³ Block and Block (2000).
- ⁷⁴ Jacobs and Wright (1999).
- ⁷⁵ Gloucestershire Constabulary (2003).
- ⁷⁶ Newman and Socia (2007).
- ⁷⁷ Gloucestershire Constabulary (2003).
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