



# GRAFFITI AND Criminal Damage



Some consider graffiti as art but others see it as a blight on private and public property. For the most part it consists of 'Tags' or nicknames. If you graffiti anywhere without the owners permission then it's criminal damage.

## DEFINITION

A person who without lawful excuse destroys or damages any property belonging to another, intending to destroy or damage any such property or being reckless as to whether any such property would be destroyed or damaged shall be guilty of an offence.

**Damage under £5,000**

**Maximum prison sentence = 3 months**

**Damage over £5,000**

**Maximum prison sentence = 10 years**

## RECKLESS

This means that you may not have intended to cause damage, but it would be obvious to most people that what you were doing would cause damage, e.g. throwing stones near windows.

## ARSON

If you damage things with fire there is always the chance that things will get out of hand and spread further than you intended.

**Maximum prison sentence = LIFE**

## BUSES, TRAINS AND TRAMS

More and more public transport has CCTV cameras on board. If you are caught on camera it is easy to find out who you are.

## VANDALISM

From smashing bus shelters and phone boxes to breaking windows and keying cars, it's all criminal damage. It causes upset, misery and a great deal of cost to you, your family, and other people. You might need a public phone in an emergency so don't damage it.

## RACE AND HATE CRIME

If damage is perceived to be offensive by different groups within the community it may be classed as an offence which receives a higher punishment than criminal damage. If the damage is racist or anti religious, then the offence is aggravated.

**Maximum prison sentence = 14 years**

## SEARCHING

Police can search you for any items you may have with you for causing criminal damage, e.g. spray cans & pens.

## PARKS AND PLAY AREAS

Leave them for children to enjoy. Please don't break them or leave smashed bottles all over the place.



**Warwickshire**  
**CRIMESTOPPERS**  
**0800 555 111**  
Working in partnership with the police

