

A The police

When someone **commits a crime** (= breaks the law and does something illegal/against the law/wrong), the police do a number of things.

They **investigate** the crime. (= try to find out what happened and who is responsible)

If they **catch** (= find) the person they believe is responsible for the crime, they will **arrest** them. (= take them to the police station because they think the person has committed the crime)

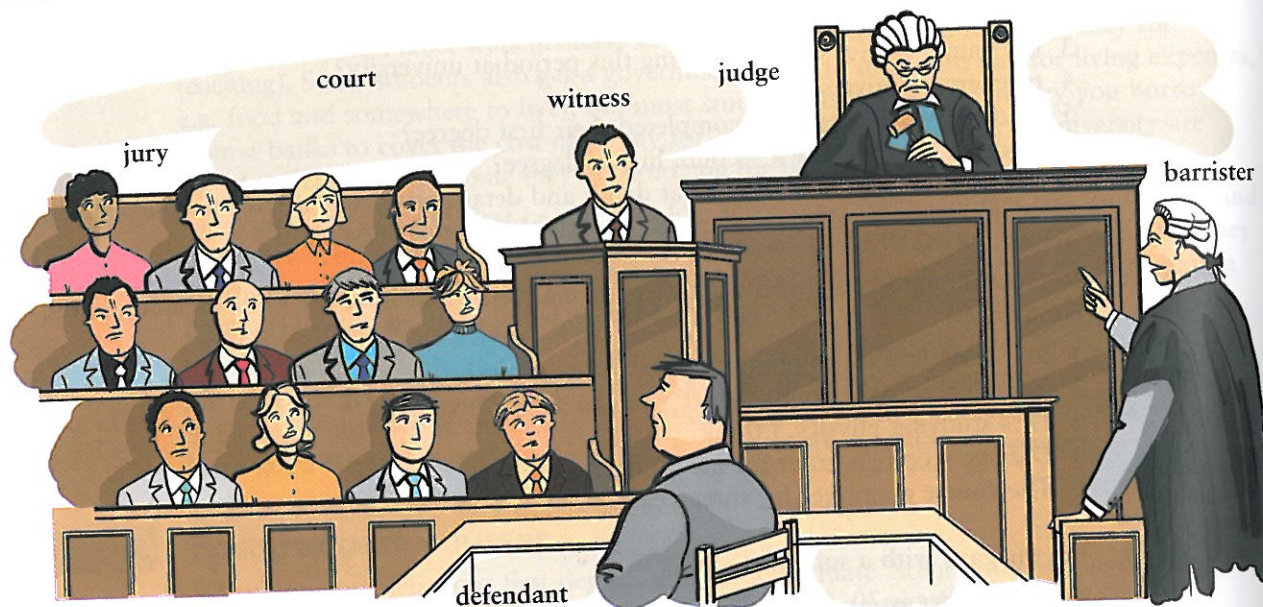
At the police station, they **question** them. (= ask them questions)

If they are sure that the person committed the crime, the person is **charged with the crime**.

(= the police make an official statement that they believe the person committed the crime)

For a serious crime (e.g. murder), the person must then go to court for trial. [see section B]

B In court



In court, the **defendant** must try to **prove** (= provide facts to show something is true) that they did not commit the crime. In other words, they must try to prove that they are **innocent** (*opp* guilty). Twelve members of the public (called the **jury**) listen to the evidence (= information about the crime, for and against) and then make their decision. People who see a crime are **witnesses**, and they usually give evidence at a trial.

C Punishment (= what a person must suffer if they do something wrong)

If someone is guilty of a crime, the judge will give the **sentence** (= the punishment). If a person is guilty of murder, the sentence may be 10–20 years in **prison**. The person then becomes a **prisoner**.

For crimes that are not serious (called **minor offences**, e.g. illegal parking), the punishment is usually a **fine**. (= money you have to pay)

Exercises

84.1 Put this story in the correct order. The first event has been given.

- they found both men guilty.
- and charged them with the robbery.
- £10,000 was stolen from a bank in the High Street. 1
- After the jury had listened to all the evidence
- The judge gave the men a prison sentence of five years.
- The trial took place two months later.
- and they finally arrested two men.
- They questioned them at the police station
- The police interviewed a number of witnesses about the crime

84.2 Answer the questions.

- Who investigate(s) crimes? *the police*
- Who sentence(s) people?
- Who live(s) in prison?
- Who decide(s) if someone is innocent or guilty?
- Who defend(s) people and present(s) evidence?
- Who commit(s) crimes?

84.3 Fill the gaps with the correct word.

- A: Have you ever the law?
B: No, never.
- A: Does anyone know why she the crime?
B: I think she needed the money.
- A: Is it legal to ride a motorbike without a licence?
B: No, it's the law.
- In Britain it is to drive a car without insurance.
- If you drive through a red light, you will have to pay a
- The defendant must try to he or she is innocent.
- The jury must decide if the defendant is innocent or
- Before they reach a decision, the jury must look at the carefully.
- If someone is guilty of murder, the will be at least ten years in prison.
- He has been in trouble before, but it was only a minor

84.4 Read the text, then write your answers to the questions below, based on your knowledge of the law in your own country. If possible, discuss your answers with someone else.

Two 15-year-old boys broke into a house when the owner was out, and took money and jewellery worth about £900. The owner reported the crime when she got home at 6 pm.

- Will the police investigate this crime?
- How will they investigate? What will they do?
- Do you think the police will catch the two boys?
- If they do, what crime will they be charged with?
- Can boys of this age go to prison?
- What do you think the sentence would be? Do you think this is the correct sentence?

A The law

If you do something **illegal/against the law** (= wrong), you have **committed a crime**. Most people commit a crime at some time in their lives, e.g. driving above the speed limit or parking illegally, etc. If you **break the law** (= do something wrong/illegal) and commit a crime, you could **get into trouble** (= be in a bad situation) with the police.

B Crimes

<i>crime</i>	<i>criminal</i> (= <i>person</i>)	<i>verb</i>
theft (= general word for stealing)	thief	steal (also take)
robbery (= steal from people or places, e.g. banks)	robber	rob
burglary (= break into a shop/house and steal things)	burglar	break in
shoplifting (= steal from shops when they're open)	shoplifter	shoplift
murder (= kill someone by intention)	murderer	murder
manslaughter (= kill someone but without intention)	-	-

C Scene of the crime

Two men **robbed** a jeweller's in west London early this morning. They **broke in** (= forced their way into the building, e.g. they broke a window) around 7am and **took/stole** rings and necklaces valued at over £10,000. Several **witnesses** (= people who see a crime) saw them leave the shop and **get away/escape** (= go away from a dangerous situation) in a blue car. The police believe both men are **armed** (= have guns) and extremely dangerous.

D Crime prevention

What can governments do to **prevent crime** (= stop crime happening) or **reduce** it (= make it less)? These things happen in some countries.

The police **carry guns**. (= have guns)

The police are **allowed to** (= are permitted to/can) stop anyone in the street and ask them questions.

Criminals receive **tough** (= hard) **punishments**, e.g. go to prison for long periods.

There is **capital punishment** (= death, e.g. by injection or electric chair) for some crimes.

What can people do to **protect themselves** (= keep themselves safe) and their **property** (= home and land)? They can do these things.

Avoid (= keep away from) dark streets **late at night** (e.g. midnight).

Avoid wearing (= try not to wear) expensive rings or watches. [Note the *-ing* form after 'avoid'.]

Have a **burglar alarm**.

Put money and **valuables** (= things worth a lot of money) in a **safe**.

Leave lights **on** at home when they go out.

Lock doors and windows when they go out.



safe burglar alarm lock

Exercises

85.1 Complete this table.

<i>crime</i>	<i>person</i>
bank robbery	bank robber
murder
burglary
theft
shoplifting

85.2 Respond to these statements or questions confirming the crime in each one.

- A: He broke into the house, didn't he?
B: Yes, he's been charged with burglary.
- A: He killed his wife?
B: Yes, he's been charged with
- A: She stole clothes from that department store, didn't she?
B: Yes, and she's been charged
- A: The man on the motorbike didn't mean to kill the boy.
B: No, but he's been
- A: He took the money from her bag?
B: Yes, but they caught him and he's

85.3 Find the best noun on the right to follow each verb on the left.

- | | |
|--------------|-------------|
| 1 lock | a a gun |
| 2 commit | b a house |
| 3 go | c the door |
| 4 carry | d a crime |
| 5 break into | e the law |
| 6 break | f to prison |

85.4 How safe and secure are you? Answer these questions with YES or NO.

- | | |
|--|----------------|
| 1 Do you often walk in areas which are not very safe? | YES = 1 NO = 0 |
| 2 Do you often walk on your own in these areas late at night? | YES = 2 NO = 0 |
| 3 Do you wear an expensive watch or expensive jewellery? | YES = 1 NO = 0 |
| 4 Do you lock doors and windows before you leave the house? | YES = 0 NO = 2 |
| 5 Do you have a burglar alarm? | YES = 0 NO = 1 |
| 6 Do you leave lights on when you go out? | YES = 0 NO = 1 |
| 7 Is there someone who protects the building when you are out? | YES = 0 NO = 2 |
| 8 Do you have a safe in your home? | YES = 0 NO = 1 |

Add up your score. Less than 3 = very safe; 3-5 = quite safe; 6-8 = you could take more care; more than 8 = you are a dangerous person to know!

85.5 Fill the gaps in these questions with a suitable word. What's your opinion?

- Do you think the police should guns?
- Do you think the police should be to stop people without a reason?
- Do you agree with capital for certain crimes such as murder?
- Do you think tougher punishments will help to crime?