

Porch Pirates, the Scourge of the 7 Seas, er, Continents

Avast me hearties, pirates be ranging the continents! They be porch pirates, and they be looking for booty in the form of boxed goodies left upon the porches and doorsteps of the unwary. Yarr! Unlike pirates of the 7 seas of old, they fire no warning shots, fly no skull-and-crossbones, and the only boarding they be doing is yer front porch. Yarr!

Like merchantmen of days gone by, your typical porch is unarmed and defenseless against the recently developed scourge known as porch pirates. And, just like the major package carriers are gearing up to handle the enormous increase in deliveries during the upcoming holiday season, so too are porch pirates increasing their raids.

No eye patches, cutlasses, parrots, Renaissance Festival garb or ominous schooners mark the porch pirates. Instead, they ply the streets driving innocuous subcompacts and wear hoods and other headgear to disguise their features. Still, they be fleet of foot and nimble of finger, leaping forth from their vehicles to snatch boxes from vulnerable porches.

All kidding and pirate metaphors aside, theft of packages from front porches is a growing problem. More people than ever are finding that shopping online with front door delivery is a lifesaver when buying for holiday and other needs. No battling through throngs of angry people, missing the item you wanted by one person or waiting in endless checkout lines staffed by surly clerks.

But are you powerless to combat this scourge of the continents, the land-faring porch pirate? Not in the least. There are things you can do to fight these rogues. An [article](#) from PCMag's "What's New Now?" email edition provides several solutions. Let's take a look at means of repelling boarders or at least porch raiders.

PCMag found in a recent survey that 28% of the respondents had a security camera keeping watch over their front porch. Another 25% have a smart doorbell, and 17% have [smart locks](#). The latter is most useful if you are okay with Amazon or Walmart employees being able to use it to open your door and secure the packages inside. Hummm...I suppose I am okay with that if they are okay with my Irish wolfhound.

Alternatives to inside access include Amazon Lockers where retail locations provide space for an Amazon "box" that provides secure access for packages until recipients can come to collect them. Amazon Hub is the version offered for apartment buildings, businesses, college campuses, and so forth.

You can buy or build a package delivery box with a [smart padlock](#). You provide the padlock combination or code to the delivery service, and they use it to put your packages inside. Pretty slick if your porch has enough space for a suitably large box.

A security camera like the [Nest Cam Outdoor](#) can alert you to people on your doorstep. Some offer the ability to talk to whoever is there, and recording footage is standard for even the lowest-cost cameras.

Along the same line are the newer entrants, video doorbells. [Ring](#) started it all, but there are other choices from Nest, SimpliSafe, August, and SkyBell, to name a few. Like the security cameras, they alert

you to someone at the door, provide a video connection, and enable two-way communication. Of course, video recording is a typical feature.

While TV ads depict porch pirates and other miscreants fleeing at the sound of your voice, that may not be enough to prevent them from snagging your brand new 60" LED television before taking to their heels. Still, they are fun gadgets and do provide a measure of deterrence.

Protecting your front porch's contents can be hit or miss, but protecting your communications, personal information, and data doesn't have to be. A different sort of pirate is roaming the internet, anxious to steal any and all data and profit from it by selling or using it. Most communications via the internet or cellphones are open to interception and theft. Even encrypted transmissions are susceptible to decryption when they rely on standard encryption methods.

If you want the comfort of knowing your communications and data are protected by the most powerful end-to-end encryption solution available outside of military and agency circles, take a look at the unique CRIP.TO [offering](#).

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