

## Security Marking to Protect Your Valuables Against Theft

Have you ever thought just how easy it would be for someone to steal your; Ipad, Motorcycle, Garden Mower, Mountain Bike, Jet Ski, or any of the other cherished possessions you own?

**Well the answer is pretty easy – and probably very quickly!**

...but amazingly, the smart people who take protection into their own hands, often find that they avoid becoming victims - after all what daft thief is going to risk getting caught, when there are so many easy pickings on offer?

Security marking valuable items will discourage burglars from stealing them by making it difficult to sell them on.

It will also help the police to ensure they are returned to you if they are stolen but subsequently found.



For home security marking, mark your property with your postcode and the number and / or name of your house, unless of course you are using a proprietary marking system such as a DNA or Microdot type security marking system which provides a unique security code for you.

Remember, while your possessions may mean a lot to you, to the thief, they are just another way of making easy cash.

### So what can you do to protect your valuables?

Well over recent months, we have covered using various types of physical measures to protect your valuables, such as locking items up or locking them down, but there are other things that you can do which can also act as an effective deterrent to thieves.

Security marking is a simple, low cost and highly recommended addition to your practical physical measures, and the good news is, it won't break the bank.

In fact security marking your valuables is strongly recommended throughout the UK by Security Specialists, Police, and Insurers, all of whom recognise and understand the benefits of doing so.

There are basically two types of security marking available, visible markings and covert or hidden markings, with the best systems combining both types for maximum effectiveness.

There are many forms of asset marking systems and products available including; asset labels, engraving, chemical etching, UV (Ultra Violet) marking, DNA marking and microdot marking among others. So let's look at each in a little more detail.

## Visual Marking Systems;

### Asset labels;

Asset Labels are a great way of identifying and recording details of the asset to which they are attached.



*some examples of asset labels*

Although virtually all labels can be removed, some such as Ultra-destruct fragmenting labels will take time to remove, while the removal of any type of label could cause damage to (and therefore reduce the resale value of) the item to which they are attached.

As a component of a security marking system therefore, the main function of a visible label is to warn thieves that other measures such as various types of stealth marking are also employed

...which will tend to encourage thieves to seek out an easier target, as no criminal wants to get caught with an item where the genuine owner can be easily identified by the police.

### Chemical Etching;

This type of low cost marking system consists of a marking compound (normally in the form of a paste or fluid), which is applied to the receiving surface through a customised stencil.



*chemical etched ID on a monitor*

Once the compound has been applied, the stencil is left in position until the marking has etched itself into the surface of the item, after which the stencil is removed.

The visible mark is therefore chemically etched permanently into the surface, although such marks are normally only very much surface markings which can be easily abraded away, albeit leaving evidence of the abrasion where the mark had been.

This type of mark is particularly popular with schools and other establishments operating on very tight budgets and with many items to mark, such as computers and office equipment, etc.

Chemical Etching can be a relatively messy product to use, but price often over-rides aesthetics and any installation inconvenience. The most popular packs are designed to mark plastics (and polymer painted surfaces such as computer casings), however specialist compounds are also available for marking certain other materials such as aluminium or glass.

## Engraving;

Anyone who has ever tried their hand at Freehand Engraving, will probably have come to the conclusion that the end result was not a pretty site!



*professional engraving*

Engraving is a very specialist form of marking, which best left to a professional engraver and is therefore relatively costly. This type of marking is ideal for presentation trophies, etc, but is less appropriate for security marking in view of the relatively high cost per unit.

## Die Punched Marks;

Once popular, Die Punched marks are still used in some industries,

...but new technologies are taking over, especially when it comes to the security marking of items.



*die punched cycle security mark*

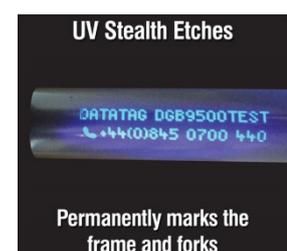
Historically die-punch marking was a popular way to security mark bicycle frames, however the introduction of new frame materials such as carbon fibre, meant it could no longer be used as the impact could shatter the frame!

...and in any event, who would want a crude die-punched mark on a smart new bicycle, especially one costing upwards of £1,000?

## Covert (Hidden) Marking Systems;

### UV (Ultra Violet) Marking;

This type of marking is sometimes called stealth marking, as the marks are generally invisible to the human eye, but fluoresce and become instantly visible when a UV light is shone on them, as shown here with a Datatag UV mark.



*UV mark on cycle frame*

Sometimes these marks are applied by brushing a UV fluid over a customised stencil, while other UV marks are simply handwritten with a low cost UV pen.

The resilience of UV marks is dependent on the quality and formulation of the UV “ink” used and while many are now water resistant once applied and will not wash off easily, some may need replacing periodically (it’s a good idea to check the mark annually), as UV marks can fade when exposed to bright light.

When using UV marking therefore, it is often best to place the mark on the item in the place least exposed to bright light, i.e. for antique vases or ornaments, the best place would normally be on the underside of the base, for pictures, mark on the back, etc.

To enable you to check your UV marks periodically, you may want to invest in a low cost UV torch or lamp.

### **DNA marking;**

Scientific advancements over recent years has made it financially viable to use hi-tech chemically unique (generally referred to as DNA marking) formulations as a form of property security marking.



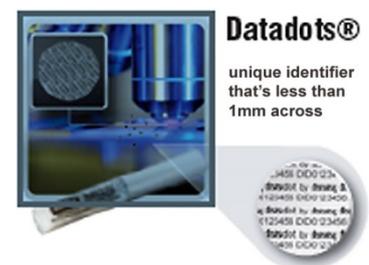
*chemically unique (DNA) marking*

Some such systems allow a small batch of a single formulation to be shared among a number of users, relying on the issue to users in different geographic locations or users in different industries or businesses to allow the registered owner of the marked product to be identified.

More sophisticated systems such as the security marking packs produced by Datatag feature a “Pack Unique DNA”, so there can be no doubt who the registered owner of the marked item is.

### **Microdot Security Marking;**

Microdot technology has been around for many years now, but many suppliers have come and gone as they have not made sufficient investment in; marketing their product, providing backup systems such as a secure database of registered owners, or providing adequate numbers of free readers to the Police.



*microdot marking*

Microdots such as the Datadot product from the Datatag system range, are less than 1mm in diameter, yet bear a unique identification code (which is registered to the owner of the marked item) along with the System Providers contact details, so the police will quickly and easily be able to get the details of the registered owner by reading the dot then checking with the Datatag Secure Database.

The microdots are typically supplied in a small bottle and are suspended in a liquid adhesive. They are simply painted onto the surfaces to be marked where they bond permanently in place.

There are generally around 1,000 dots in each bottle, so there are plenty enough to mark many items, and it only requires thieves to miss just one dot when trying to clear all marks from a stolen item, to face arrest and prosecution for illegal possession of stolen goods!

The Datatag Datadot system is well established and the Polices are well equipped with appropriate readers to be able to read the contents of the tiny microdots

### **Electronic Transponders;**

These clever devices are basically tiny electronic circuits embedded in a protective housing or printed onto a special surface. Each unit is programmed with a unique identification code which cannot be deleted or changed in any way.



*Glass Tag transponder*



*Button Tag transponder*

These products can vary in size according to type and application, and range from tiny glass transponders roughly the size of a grain of rice, to button shaped units about the size of a small painkiller tablet.

For some applications the transponder can even take the form of a larger flat disc, as it does for those placed under floor carpets in vehicles, however, transponders could be manufactured in almost any shape or size required for a specific application.

Transponders require no power supply and are “fit and forget” products. They are activated when a matching scanner unit passes close to the transponder, at which time the scanner reads and displays the unique identification code.

## **Budget Price Security Marking Solutions for the Home;**

Probably the simplest and cheapest security marking solution, is to protect your valuables and equipment by writing your postcode and house number on to your items with a special security marker pen.

Use a Permanent Ink Pen to mark items where you want the mark to show, such as marking garden tools or your childrens school kit.



...to mark antiques or other valuables which would be spoiled by a visual mark, apply a hidden mark with a UV Marker such as a **UV pen**, sometimes called an **Invisible Pen** as the mark is invisible until an Ultra Violet light is shone on it.



The range of **Home Security Marking Packs** from Insight Security certainly won't break the bank ...and with a choice of UV Marker, ink marker or scribe type security markers to choose from, there's bound to be a pack that's just right for you.

## Home Security Marking Packs from Insight Security



### Simple, Effective and Easily Affordable Solutions

...and every Insight Home Security Marking Pack contains a UV light to allow you to check your UV marks, as well as a convenient record card, on which you can record details of the items you have marked as well as where you've marked them!



and there's even a new video to watch: [Home UV Security Marking](#)

### More Help;

For more information about Security Marking products and full details of a wide range of tried and proven security and safety products visit;

[www.insight-security.com](http://www.insight-security.com)

or call the Insight Security Team on tel: **01273 475500**

see below for a Quick Link to the “**Security Marking**” pages;

<https://www.insight-security.com/asset-marking-and-labels>