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## The importance of protecting your tech gifts

Tech devices have become some of the most popular items to purchase, especially in the build-up to Christmas, when most people are already on the lookout for the perfect gifts for their loved ones. On Black Friday and Cyber Monday, these valuable items come at a great discount and, as they're cheaper, they are often bought without giving insurance a thought. But what if your amazing early Christmas present is damaged before the time, or even worse – stolen?

According to the Governance, Public Safety and Justice Survey (GPSJS) 2018/19, released by Stats SA this October, there were roughly 1,2 million incidences of theft of personal property which affected 2,5% of citizens aged 16 or older. There were also around 580 000 cases of street robbery over the same period.

Vera Nagtegaal, Executive Head of online comparison website [Hippo.co.za](http://Hippo.co.za), says that it is important to ensure that your tech devices are covered when leaving your home, as this could save thousands in replacement costs should they be damaged or stolen.

Nagtegaal explains that a home contents policy insures everything you keep in your home, so it would naturally cover that new state of the art TV or other high-tech items. “Unfortunately, what this may not cover is the tech devices that you take out of your home. So, should you take that new phone or iPad out and it gets damaged or stolen, you will be liable unless this is covered by specific insurance policies designed for these items or specified on your existing policy.”

Consumers also face an additional financial woe should this happen. Apart from the replacement costs, if you bought a device on a package deal with a cell phone contract provider for example, you will be liable to continue paying the monthly cost of the damaged or stolen item as well, which could add to financial pressure during the festive season.

To avoid this from happening to you, Nagtegaal points out that you should investigate whether there are any limits to your insurance policy. “If items like your cell phone leaves your home, it may not be insured under the household contents policy. So, it is important to check with your insurer. Some insurance companies offer separate insurance to make provision for theft and accidental damage outside of your home, such as an All Risk or Portable Possessions Insurance policy.”

These insurance products can be valuable to have to ensure the tech devices you carry with you on a daily basis are protected. “It is important to note that if you are out and about, the items will only be covered if they are stolen or damaged while in your possession. If your devices are left on your car seat while you are shopping for instance, your insurance provider will likely reject your claim. Either carry the items on you or lock them in the boot or cubbyhole when you leave your car,” Nagtegaal says.

She advises consumers who have purchased tech products in-store without insurance, to check and compare insurance options online. “Since there is a variety of insurance products available for different kinds of cell phones, laptops and other tech devices, it is advisable to make an informed decision in the comfort of your own home, away from the sales rush experienced in-stores.”

“It is important to also make sure you understand the different types of insurance policies and what items are covered, as well as the period each item is covered for,” she adds.

In addition to insuring your devices, Nagtegaal has the following tips to keep your tech gadgets safe:

- Don't advertise your new tech product on social media. You never know who could be watching.
- Make security a priority in your home. Always check that your doors are locked and windows are closed when you're out or go to bed at night.
- Always keep your receipts and take a photo of the serial numbers of your devices. You will need this in the event of a claim.
- Be discreet when discarding packaging. Those big boxes might draw unwanted attention.

Nagtegaal urges consumers to act responsibly when purchasing pricey tech gadgets during the Black Friday rush. "If you're going to accept that irresistible offer, do yourself a favour and insure it."

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### **ABOUT HIPPO.CO.ZA**

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