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Stealing

Stealing, from the Old English verb *stelan*, is when one person takes another person's property without permission or legal right and without intending to return it. Depending on what you're after, you can steal a kiss, steal a base, steal the show, steal someone's heart, and even steal someone blind.

Aside from bases, kisses, shows, and hearts (for which you may or may not be forgiven), stolen property can be as small as some pocket change or as big as a car. It can be taken from a friend or a stranger, from a store or someone's home. Bottom line is, no matter what it is or where it's from, if you take something that doesn't belong to you and someone didn't say you could have it, then it's stealing.

People steal for different reasons.

1. Peer pressure. (Someone dares you to do it.)
2. Jealousy. (You want something someone else has.)
3. Anger. (You want to get even with someone.)
4. Need. (You don't have enough money for something you really need, like food.)
5. Desire. (You don't have enough money for something you really want, like a new skateboard. Or you want something you can't legally buy, like beer or cigarettes.)
6. Embarrassment. (You want something that you're embarrassed to buy, like a condom.)
7. Fun. (To show off and get a thrill.)
8. Impulse. (You see something you want and you take it.)

No matter what motivates you, stealing is against the law. And it causes lots of problems when you're caught. Think about it. If you steal a computer game, the store's owner could tell you not to come back again, or he could call the police. And if you've been caught stealing before, you'll probably have to go to court. No matter how you cut it, you'll have to return the game. It's a loser either way.

Stealing Dos and Don'ts

- Do the right thing.
- Don't steal.

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