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# How to check IF A GUN IS STOLEN

**The Ohio Stolen Gun Portal — a first in the state — is a new searchable website designed to increase public safety by helping to identify and recover stolen firearms:**

[www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/stolengun](http://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/stolengun)

This new tool protects innocent buyers and traders, and provides opportunities to return stolen firearms to their rightful owners.

The portal, presented by the Ohio Attorney General's Office, contains information reported by law enforcement agencies throughout Ohio. The portal updates every 24 hours to add the latest reports on stolen firearms and to remove information on guns that have been recovered.

## **Be advised:**

- The Ohio Attorney General's Office strongly recommends that no citizen take individual action based on the information in this database. If you come across a gun listed in the database, notify your local law enforcement agency or the agency that originally reported the weapon stolen.
- This information should not be used as confirmation or probable cause that a firearm is stolen, nor should it be relied upon for any type of legal action.
- The identification number assigned to a particular gun by the manufacturer and/or owner may not be unique; duplicates may exist.
- The information is based on what is entered into the central database. The Attorney General's Office cannot represent that the information is active or complete. Database users are encouraged to verify the status by contacting a local law enforcement agency or the reporting agency.

PROTECTING ★ THE ★ UNPROTECTED



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## Frequently asked questions

### ***What is the “serial number”?***

The serial number is the unique identifier for a gun.

According to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), the serial number must be conspicuously engraved, cast or stamped (impressed) on the firearm frame or receiver. Firearm identification requirements are spelled out in the Code of Federal Regulations: 27 CFR 479.102 and 27 CFR 478.92.

Please note that the identification number assigned to a particular gun by the manufacturer and/or owner may not be unique; duplicates may exist. [See Firearms Verification – Marking Requirements in ATF Ruling 75-28.]

Federal law makes it illegal to alter or remove a firearm’s serial number (26 U.S. Code § 5861).

### ***How often is the database refreshed?***

The data is updated with the latest information every day at 11 p.m. When a search is made during the updating process, the result may not be associated with the serial number that was entered. The Attorney General’s Office strongly recommends that citizens avoid searching between 11 and 11:30 p.m., as the system could return inaccurate or incomplete results while files are being processed.

### ***What is the source of the data?***

This database consists of stolen-gun information that is reported to the Law Enforcement Automated Data System (LEADS) by Ohio law enforcement agencies. The information is authorized for release to the public.

### ***What is the “make” of the gun?***

A gun’s make identifies its manufacturer, brand or model, as entered by the reporting agency. If this field says “unknown,” please contact the reporting agency for more information.

### ***What is the “reporting agency”?***

The reporting agency is the agency that reported the gun theft. The field name has a character limit, so some common terms may be abbreviated (such as “SO” for sheriff’s office, “CO” for county, or “PD” for police department).

