



Private Residential CCTV Advice from the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)

Using CCTV on your property

CCTV used on your property will be exempt from the Data Protection Act unless you are capturing footage of individuals outside your property.

However, regardless of whether your CCTV system is exempt, the ICO recommends that you use CCTV in a responsible way to protect the privacy of others.

How can I use my CCTV on my property responsibly?

The guiding principle throughout the deployment of your CCTV equipment should be checking at each stage that its use is necessary and not disproportionate. For example – ask yourself:

- Do I really need a camera to address my security concerns?
- Would extra lighting or sensor lighting be as effective?
- Is there an alternative to a camera?
- Is there anyone who could advise me about alternatives?
- What is the most privacy friendly way to set it up?
- Can I avoid intruding into my neighbours' property?

What if my camera captures footage of individuals beyond the boundaries of my property?

You must consider whether it is necessary for your camera to operate beyond the boundary of your property.

If your camera covers, even partially, any areas beyond the boundaries of your property, such as neighbouring gardens or the street, then it will no longer be exempt from the Data Protection Act (DPA) under the domestic purposes exemption. This does not mean that you are breaching the DPA but it does mean that you are subject to it.

What can I do to make sure that what I'm doing complies with the DPA?

First, think about the problem you are trying to address and the best solution to it. This will usually be to safeguard you and your property against crime. Check your local police advice about crime prevention. Better locks or security lighting may be a more effective and less expensive way of securing your property.

If you decide to use CCTV cameras you should:

- consider what areas would need to be covered by it, will the camera capture images you actually need and how you will safeguard any recorded images so they can be used by the police to investigate crimes affecting you
- consider whether you can put up signs clearly explaining that recording is taking place and take steps to do so
- ensure you have activated settings to enable the security of footage captured by the CCTV system and that any recordings of individuals are held securely. Make sure that you only allow access to people who need it;
- consider speaking to your neighbours and explain what you are doing and any objections or suggestions they have. (It may be useful to invite your neighbours to view the footage that you capture, this may allay any concerns they may have about your use of a CCTV system)
- consider purchasing equipment that enables you to control what you can record. This will enable you to keep privacy intrusion to a minimum.
- You should remember that your use of a CCTV system may be appropriate but publicly uploading or streaming footage of individuals will require further justification and in most cases will not be justifiable.
- As the data controller for this footage, individuals do have the right to request a copy of it from you under the DPA, if you collect their personal data.