



Types of Crime and How People Get Punished

KS3 CITIZENSHIP

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What Is Crime?

Crime is when someone breaks the law. The law is a set of rules that everyone in a country must follow. When people commit crimes, they can harm others or damage property. Different crimes are treated differently by the **justice system**—the courts and police that decide what happens to lawbreakers.

Types of Crime

Crimes fall into two main groups: **crimes against property** and **crimes against people**.

Crimes against property include **theft** (stealing), **burglary** (breaking into homes or shops to steal), and **vandalism** (damaging someone else's belongings). These harm people's possessions rather than their bodies.

Think of it like borrowing your friend's toy without asking and breaking it—you've damaged their property.

Crimes against people are more serious. They include **assault** (hitting or hurting someone), **robbery** (stealing from someone using force), and **murder** (killing someone). These directly hurt individuals.

There are also **financial crimes** like **fraud** (tricking people out of money) and **cybercrime** (breaking into computer systems or stealing online), which can affect many people at once.

How Are People Punished?

When someone is caught breaking the law, they go to **court**. A **judge** or **jury** (a group of ordinary people) decides if they're guilty. If they are, the judge decides the **punishment**.

Minor crimes might result in a **fine**—paying money to the government. More serious crimes lead to **prison sentences**, where people lose their freedom and must stay in jail for months or years. The worst crimes can mean life in prison.

Think of it like being sent to your room—the punishment fits how badly you behaved.

Some people also receive **community service**, where they do unpaid work to help their community. This is often used for first-time or less serious offenders.

Why Do We Punish Criminals?

Punishment has three main purposes: to **deter** (discourage) people from committing crimes, to **rehabilitate** (help criminals change), and to **protect society** by keeping dangerous people locked away. The goal is to make communities safer for everyone.