



## CPTED Strategies

- Provide clear border definition of controlled space (e.g., fences, hedges, paving patterns and low walls). Avoid unassigned space. As much as possible, all space should become the clear responsibility of someone.
- Provide clearly marked transitional zones that indicate movement from public to semiprivate to private space. For example, the sidewalk represents public space and the main path into a residential development is semiprivate, and a path that branches to an individual unit(s) becomes semiprivate and the interior of the unit becomes private space.
- Relocate gathering areas to locations that provide natural surveillance and access control, as opposed to locations away from the view of would-be offenders. For example, all play areas should be located within the central common area of the building with as many units as possible able to glance or actively watch children at play.
- Place activities in locations where the natural surveillance of these activities will increase the perception of safety for legitimate users and risk for offenders. For example, well-used common areas (safe) may overlook a parking area (unsafe) to provide additional security for the parking area.
- Place activities in locations to overcome vulnerability of these activities with natural surveillance and access control of the safe area. For instance, common toilet facilities and laundry rooms should not be located in a remote corner of the site or at the end of a long nameless hallway. Locate these facilities (unsafe) adjacent to the entry or location where there is normally high foot traffic (safe).
- Redesign or revamp space to increase the perception or reality of natural surveillance.



You may contact the Los Angeles Police Department by calling the following, toll free, at 1-877-ASK-LAPD (1-877-275-5273) or TTY 1-877-275-5273 for the hearing impaired. You may also obtain additional information on this subject, along with additional crime prevention tips, by visiting the Los Angeles Police Department's Web site at [www.lapdonline.org](http://www.lapdonline.org) and clicking on the "Crime Prevention Tips" icon.

Should you have information regarding a criminal investigation or activity, please contact your local police station or the LAPD crime hotline at 1-877-LAWFULL (1-877-529-3855).

Los Angeles Police Department  
Community Relations Section  
Crime Prevention Unit  
150 North Los Angeles Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
(213) 485-3134  
[www.lapdonline.org](http://www.lapdonline.org)

Brochure designed by California State University Northridge Graphic Design students and faculty.

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## Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

[www.lapdonline.org](http://www.lapdonline.org)



The term CPTED is used to describe a series of physical design characteristics that maximize resident control of criminal behavior within a residential community. A residential environment designed under CPTED guidelines clearly defines all areas as either public, semiprivate, or private. In so doing, it determines who has the right to be in each space, and allows residents to be confident in responding to any questionable activity or persons within their complex. The same design concepts improve the ability of police to monitor activities within the community.

The proper design and effective use of public and private space can lead to a reduction in the incidence and fear of crime, reduction in calls for police service and to an increase in the quality of life within a community.

## THREE CPTED STRATEGIES

### Natural Surveillance

Surveillance is a design concept directed primarily at keeping intruders under observation. Therefore, the primary thrust of a surveillance strategy is to facilitate observation and to accomplish the effect of an increased perception of risk. Surveillance strategies are typically classified as organized (e.g., police patrol) mechanical (e.g., lighting) and natural (e.g., windows).

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## Natural Access Control

Access control strategies are typically classified as organized (e.g., guards), mechanical (e.g., locks), and natural (e.g., spatial definition). This lesson plan outline will concentrate on the third strategy of natural access control. The primary thrust of an access control strategy is to deny access to a crime target and to create a perception of risk in offenders.

## Territorial Reinforcement

The concept of territoriality suggests that physical design can contribute to a sense of territoriality. That is, physical design can create or extend a sphere of territorial influence so potential offenders perceive that territorial influence. For example: low walls, landscape and paving patterns to clearly define the space around a unit entry as belonging to (and the responsibility of) the residents of that unit.

## DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS

### Natural Surveillance/Visual Connection

- Provide an opportunity for people engaged in normal everyday activity to observe the space around them. Place activities where individuals engage in those activities so they become part of the natural surveillance system without interruption to their activity.
- Provide a good “visual connection” between residential and/or commercial units and public environments such as streets, common areas, parks, sidewalks, parking areas and alleys. Place actively used rooms such as kitchens, living/family room and lobbies to allow for good viewing of parking, streets and/or common areas. Managers, attendants and security personnel should have extensive views of these areas.



- Provide for the ability to see into a room or space prior to entering.
- Take advantage of mixed use if it exists and provide good “visual connection” between uses. This may enable natural surveillance during the day and evening, (i.e., a commercial zone that becomes vacant in the evening or a residential zone that is uninhabited during the day).

## Natural Access Control/Spatial Definition

- Provide clear well-lit paths from the street to the development through all parking and landscape areas, and within the development to building entries.
- Avoid indistinct walkways and entries where occupants and guests may become “lost or disoriented” or must search for the correct entry or unit.
- Provide adequate lighting, width of path, definition of path and ability to see a destination.
- Provide obvious physical security techniques such as locks, lights, walls, gates and security signs.

The CPTED information included in this brochure was compiled from information obtained from the City’s Design Out Crime Task Force and the Crime Prevention Unit, Community Relations Section. Experience strongly suggests that application of CPTED in combination with other Department crime prevention programs will help reduce crime and fear of crime in the community.