

What Items Can't be Taken into Downing Centre Court?

If you are going to court, it's important to check what can and cannot be taken inside the courthouses to ensure your day in court runs as smoothly as possible.

While not all smaller courthouses are fitted with scanners in the entry way, the Downing Centre Courthouse is.

In fact, on particularly busy mornings in the Downing Centre – which is the larger of the two [court houses on Liverpool Street, Sydney](#) – the queue to enter the building and go through the scanners can be all the way out the doors of the building.

Some items are not allowed to be taken in to court, and may be confiscated on the spot. Other items are handed back to you on your way out. You will be given a receipt for those.

Prohibited Items

There are four broad categories of items that can be confiscated from you:

1. Anything reasonably believed to be a restricted item or offensive implement;
2. Anything reasonably believed to be capable of concealing a restricted or offensive implement;
3. Alcohol, unless you have the permission of a Magistrate, Judge or Registrar; or
4. Any other thing that the security officer believes on reasonable grounds is of a class [prescribed by the regulations](#)

There are probably no surprises here in terms of the first category. Security officers can confiscate:

- Guns
- Knives
- Grenades
- Bombs
- Missiles
- Spear gun
- Crossbow
- Sling shot
- Mace
- Taser guns
- Nunchucks

But while it may seem obvious not to bring items from the above list, this isn't necessarily clear to everyone.

One [Newcastle man attempted to bring a crossbow into court](#) earlier this year, and court staff are regularly called upon to confiscate of knives and mace (pepper spray).

Being found attempting to take these items in to court can even result in criminal charges.

One notable, and controversial, exception to this rule is the recent agreement between courts and police for [police officers to bring their guns to court, and even inside the courtroom](#). Previously, police were required to leave guns outside the courthouse like everyone else unless they have permission to bring them inside.

Aside from weapons, there are a range of objects that you are not allowed to take into court. These include:

- Scissors
- Glass water bottles or other glass containers
- Sporting bats capable of being used as a weapon
- Hammers and screwdrivers capable of being used as a weapon
- Scooters, skateboards and other personal transport items
- Spray cans

- Marker pens
- Unlike weapons, or devices used to hide weapons, if these items are confiscated, you can get them back on your way out.

You will have to leave your name and phone number and get a receipt on your way in, so that you can collect your items when leaving.

While selfie sticks are allowed in to court, they can set off alerts in the scanner, and those bringing them into court should be aware that it is against the law to take photos, videos or record sound while inside a courthouse without permission.

One busy journalist found herself in trouble after accidentally taking in a key ring with a small knife she used to chop food, and a capsicum spray canister that she had bought in Western Australia, where it is legal.

She had completely forgotten the items were in her bag, and was shocked to find herself [facing criminal charges which carry a maximum penalty of 14 years imprisonment.](#)

Fortunately, the Magistrate was sympathetic and dismissed the case against her. But it's far better to plan ahead than to face an unpleasant and stressful situation, particularly if you are already at court in relation to other criminal proceedings.