Key Findings: The Chicago Inmate Survey of Gun Access and Use (CIS)  
University of Chicago Crime Lab  
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Survey Overview
This survey included interviews with 221 gun-involved, Chicago-residents serving time in Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) prisons in 2016, and was complemented by police and court records.  
To learn more about the survey, visit: https://urbanlabs.uchicago.edu/labs/crime

Method of Acquisition for Gun Possessed Within 6 Months of Arrests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purchase or Trade</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gift</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theft</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Social networks were important sources of illegally acquired guns, with many guns coming from friends (30%) and acquaintances (13%).

Cooperation with Police Following Gunshot Victimization

- **39%** Knew the identity of their shooter
- **12%** Of those who knew the shooter’s identity were willing to talk to police

Contacting Police After Victimization
Only 19% of those who were shot reported calling the police themselves, while many more reported that someone else reported the shooting or that police were contacted when they went to the hospital. About 77% said that police interviewed them about the shooting.

Perception of Legal Risk & Risk Management

**How Respondents Reduce Risk of Arrest**

- **60%** sometimes avoid carrying guns
- **45%** discard guns
- **38%** perceive police may make a deal instead of arrest
- **36%** sell guns

Access to Ammunition

**Sources of Ammunition**
The most common source for acquiring ammunition was purchasing it on the streets (49%). About 15% reported having someone straw purchase ammunition from an FFL, which was higher than the 5% who listed this as a method for obtaining a gun. Respondents perceived there was less risk of getting caught straw purchasing ammunition than a gun.

- **40%** Reported it would take them a day or less to gain access to ammunition
- **30%** Reported it took a day or less to acquire a gun

**Time to Crime (TTC)**
Most guns in possession at time of arrest had been acquired shortly before: 19% within 5 days, 50% within 9 weeks. Despite recent acquisition, most of the guns had likely been in circulation for years, since the average time from the first legal purchase of a gun to its use in a crime is about 12.4 years in Chicago.

- **Average time between gun acquisition and gun arrest:** 2 **MONTHS**