

A RAID ZINE

How to prepare,
What to expect, and
How to cope

Version One
June 2026

This zine was written on the violently stolen and occupied lands of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nation. We pay our deepest respects to the Wurundjeri people and their elders, past and present, whose ongoing sovereignty was never ceded, and who maintain law and lore over this land. The colonial legal system has no jurisdiction over these lands, nor authority to dictate legality or morality on this country.

This zine was written in response to what some have called an ‘increase’ or ‘escalation’ in recent state repression in “~~Victoria~~” against activists (who are often settlers). The information and experiences shared in this zine speak from this perspective. However, “~~Australia~~”’s violent repression is nothing new, and has been at the core of the state’s policing, legal systems, welfare systems, and very identity since its genocidal beginning. It is an aberration when white settlers get caught up in these systems, and in no way should distract from the daily reality of Indigenous people whom the state seeks to eradicate. We simply hope that this zine can help strengthen anti-colonial movements to weaken, destroy, shatter, and attack the colony by any means necessary.

May we live to see the colony fall.

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DEFINITIONS:

RAID: when police, border force, or other state actors come to a home, workplace, or other venue or location to search and possibly arrest someone for an alleged crime; colloquially this is called a 'raid' or 'police raid.'

PIG and COP: refers to police, border force, counter-terror; general term for actors of the state such as police.

SNITCH: Someone who gives information to the police, often in order to lower consequences against themselves.

PASSCODE: A combination of letters and/or numbers to gain access to a digital device.

ENCRYPTION/ENCRYPTED: A method of storing or transmitting data that encodes the original data so that it can only be read under specific circumstances or by specific programs. In simple words, it has a password or can only be viewed by the person you sent it to.

STASH/STASHED: Stashing refers to hiding something where it is harder for the pigs to find.

DUTY LAWYER: A lawyer given to you when in custody or at court if you cannot access other legal representation.

BEFORE THE RAID

This section gives tips for planning your actions **before a raid has happened**. You will not have time to make these plans once a raid has already begun.

If you – or your broader community - work on any projects the state could be interested in repressing, you must have a plan in case you are raided and arrested. Even if you don't think the state is interested in you, if you're involved in any type of anti-colonial or anti-state groups, you will probably need to support a loved one/comrade/partner in mischief through an arrest or raid at some point.

The possibility of a police raid is a scary reality to come to terms with – but it is ALWAYS worth arming yourself and your loved ones/comrades/partners in mischief with knowledge about how to handle raids. Having these conversations (in person, and without tech) can protect yourself and your communities from the harm the state wants to inflict on individuals and groups, as well as make the state's repression far less effective and help us to continue doing liberation work.

When making a raid plan, do not rely on the police doing what they are “supposed” to do, or what they have done during previous raids.

This applies during the raid, during your arrest, or during court. It can be dangerous to make a raid plan that relies on trusting that the cops will follow the “law” or act in a certain way. For example:

- If you have heard that the police will always knock on the door, or announce themselves to you, you may assume that you will have time to put your duress passcode into your phone, or stash something you don’t want them to find, or message a friend to let them know you are being raided. Consequently, you might leave incriminating information on your phone overnight, or items in plain view. Often the police will not act the way you expect – you may instead wake up to them already in your room, stealing your things – so you must be prepared for this.
- If you expect that the police will only come at a certain time of the day (e.g. a dawn raid), you may leave things out of their stash spots once you have woken up. Instead, expect that the police could come to knock on your door at any time.

Police tactics are always evolving, and they do not care about what your rights are, or keeping things consistent. Above all, do not rely on having time or warning to act on any plans to make anything “better” inside the place being raided (hiding things, trying to leave the place etc.)

Because of this, the way you live is the way you will be raided

The cops rely on you not being prepared, so **be prepared** – in every part of your home, or any location that is vulnerable to a raid! Since a raid could commence at any time with no warning, assume that the way you go to sleep is the way you will be raided; and the way you leave your house, at any time of day, is how the cops will find your things.

Some tips and things to consider are below. This is in no way exhaustive, and we encourage you to think of other things you could do to stay safe!

- Do not have any clothing, tools, cameras, or other items in your house that could link you to an alleged crime. Throw these away as soon as you can!
- Do not have any notes that appear incriminating or contain information the state could want. Destroy these as soon as you can! If the notes are needed for a longer period of time, store them on an encrypted and stashed USB instead.
- Stash other work-related items such as zines, or USBs. If they are very naughty, store them somewhere less likely to be raided.
- Use long and difficult-to-guess passwords on your technology, such as phones, laptops, and USBs. Password managers like Bitwarden and Protonpass can generate long passwords for you. Disable face ID or fingerprint access. Use a short and easy-to-remember duress password if your device is capable, but don't rely on having time to put it in.
- Don't use your phone for anything that you wouldn't want shown to you in a court room. Don't search for things related to

a crime on your phone. Ideally, don't message anyone anything incriminating, including messages with details about times and locations for a crime.

- Regularly “clean” your house and technology (including deleting messages).
- Have multiple admins in group chats so you can be removed quickly.
- Consider ways you could live that would make it harder to find you if the state might wish to raid you, or at least to get access to you and your property.

Have someone to call

When you are in police custody, you have the ‘right’ to two phone calls - one a a lawyer and one to a friend/family member to let them know you are in custody. (However, as addressed above, the cops may choose to waive your ‘rights’ to these phone calls for a made-up reason.) Since your phone calls are probably listened to by the police, you should plan and talk to your chosen person *beforehand* to ensure they know exactly what information to pass on, and who to tell, safely. It is very important that your community knows as quickly as possible that you have been raided to keep everyone else safe.

Plan *who* to call:

- If you want to call an activist friend, the police may deny this call if they are known to police, or if they believe that person may interfere in your arrest. Consider your chosen person's safety too – the police may go on to surveil or investigate them.

- For this reason, it can be good to consider calling someone not very involved in activist work, such as a family member or friend. However, it can make the next point a bit trickier to work out:

Plan *how* they will let people know:

- Talk with the chosen person (ideally in person) about the processes they will need to take to communicate *as quickly and safely as possible* to the your loved ones/comrades/partners in mischief that you have been raided and that your devices are likely compromised.
- If you call someone who does not generally know other activists, such as a family member, talk to them about how to safely inform people the people who need to know, since it is possible that their calls and SMS will be monitored. This may involve introducing your family member to Signal!

Plan *what* they should pass on:

- Tell them they should pass on where you are, who was raided with you, and what technology was taken. You may want them to pass on what was on the warrant, or an indication of what the raid was in relation to.
- Tell them that if you have been raided, your technology will likely be compromised. No one should message or call your devices. They should delete messages sent to you, remove you from group chats, and block you. This helps prevent network mapping, or the police messaging your friends from your phone.
- Additionally, think about how you will tell people about the raid when you are out, and what you will tell them.

Plan what you will need as a support:

- Consider showing your chosen person the list in the “support” section of this document to plan ahead!

Have a plan for the people in your home

Consider having safe chats with the people who you may be raided with. If you have dependents, make a clear plan with the person you are calling about who will care for them, feed them, and inform them what is happening. If you have other vulnerable housemates, make a plan with them about how to keep them safer.

Make promises to your friends and community, and know the consequences of breaking them.

Making decisions in custody can be really difficult, especially when they are incredibly high-stakes decisions in a very high-risk scenario. If you have already considered the decisions you may have to make, and promised your friends how you will make them, it is much easier to not get bamboozled by cops, lawyers, and isolation all pulling you towards snitching (or agreeing to more repressive bail conditions than you can live with).

Make agreements with your close friends/partners in mischief about what you will decide in custody – even for things you think are obvious or go unspoken. These can range from security non-negotiables, to gentler agreements you have to avoid isolation post-raid.

For example, promise them that:

- you will **not hand over your passwords** to your devices,
- you will only give a **no-comment** interview,
- you will **not make small talk** with the cops,
- or even, you will not sign specific bail conditions such as non-association orders.

Talk with them about the consequences of breaking these agreements (e.g. not working with you again, being angry with you, processes of accountability for fuck ups that put others at risk). Make these agreements with yourself as well, so you know you can stick by them when you're alone in the cell or interview room.

Keep an eye out for surveillance that could indicate a raid is coming

You may get no warning that a raid is coming, and the cops just bash your door down one day. However, sometimes there are signs that the state is interested in you. We encourage you to read zines that specifically talk to what surveillance from the state can look like. From what we know, keep an eye out for cars or people following you, unfamiliar cars parked outside your house with or without people in them, or your phone acting 'weird' or draining battery faster than usual. Even when we aren't noticing anything suspicious, have security measures in place anyway – you can't be sure when you're being watched, and there is no surefire way to protect yourself from being raided or having interactions with the state.

Ways to minimize the impact of surveillance are also discussed in surveillance zines.

Considering the burden of technology and admin

Raids are very traumatic, but they are also super inconvenient. When your technology is stolen, it can be really hard to get back into your accounts (including email, Centrelink, social media etc), especially when we often rely on 2FA with our phone numbers. There is no guarantee as to when, or if, you will get your phone back from the police.

You can try and make this easier on yourself by:

- Using a password manager like BitWarden to keep all your passwords centralised (to sign into BitWarden after a raid, you will probably need to get a 2FA code from the email you use to sign up, so memorise that password as well as the Master Password).
- Having hard copies of all your identity documents, tax file number, CRN, bank account number, scripts etc.
- If you are sentimentally attached to photos on your phone, consider saving your them to an encrypted Cloud such as Proton, or having hard copies.
- Have some cash to use before you get back into your bank accounts. If you can, set up auto pay for important bills. Make sure you have your physical banks card and aren't relying on things like Apple pay.
- Have important numbers memorized or written down somewhere. Obviously, these may be found by police, so only

include ones you want the state to know about, such as your family members or your shitty landlord.

- Have a physical calendar (only with things you're happy for the state to see). Life continues after you are raided - it's good to not rely on your phone to keep track of important appointments or reminders.

DURING RAID AND ARREST

What does a raid look like?

Raids are terrifying and sudden invasions of your life. They are designed to be confusing and to intimidate you. No matter how prepared you feel, suddenly being confronted with one of your worst enemies in your bedroom is awful. It is important to stick to your plan and to your gut.

Some things you could expect to happen are:

- Finding out you've been raided because the cops are in your room.

Cops can do anything they want to enter your property. They have been known to knock incessantly on the door, but also to gain access to keys via your landlord, or just bashing down the door. It is still important to keep your doors, gates and anything you can locked to make gaining entry at least marginally more difficult. If you have a screen door, keep it locked at all times when you are home, as they are harder to penetrate and make it easier to open the door and ask to see the warrant through the screen door without the pigs forcing their way inside. You should ask to be shown the warrant before they enter the house or search for items - but again, cops don't follow the law.

- Lots of loud noises, including shouting.

Expect a bunch of men announcing themselves by yelling things like "police search warrant" and your name, demands to open doors or

breaking down doors, physically assaulting you, switching lights on or off, or phones being grabbed out of your hands.

- Being separated from the other people in your house.

This is the first way they isolate you. The cops may say it's for things like initial questioning or for "safety". This may be one of the times they try to get you to give over your password. Stay staunch.

- Loss of control of intimate space and physical movement

The cops will use anything and everything against you, including whether you're allowed to access meds, eat food, or feed your cat. Once the police are in control you will not be left alone. Using the bathroom and changing or getting dressed will be monitored by a cop. They will offer you a cop of the "same gender" but this is based on availability and their perception of your gender. It's up to you whether you argue with them, or if you feel it doesn't make a difference to how comfortable you feel or if you need to make a decision about how the state is perceiving you.

- To have your possessions taken, broken or rummaged through.

When raiding a home or other known location, police will often have a warrant with a list of items they are searching for, such as clothes and other items they hope will implicate you. The warrant will almost always include any digital devices including phones, iPods, cameras, laptops, USBs and SD cards. Police will likely take any digital devices even if they are not on the warrant. You should read other zines and instructional materials on how to manage risk and raid safety relating specifically to phones, laptops, and passcodes. They may also take photos of things like personal diaries, political stickers, zines, and banners/posters to construe something as 'evidence', even if an item is not on the warrant or is used for a

hobby/art (for example a chemistry textbook could be construed as evidence of trying to manufacture illegal substances). Generally they can take whatever they think they can get away with taking (which is pretty much anything).

All this stuff won't necessarily hold water in court, but it is good to be aware of just how petty cops can be when searching through your things.

- To be asked to hand over your passwords to your devices

Police will almost always ask you to give them access to your devices by supplying the passwords. If they have a warrant for the passwords, it is an offence not to hand them over – but we strongly urge you to refuse. The police may have a specific warrant from a magistrate ordering you to give over the passwords to your devices (under section 465AA of the Crimes Act, it is an indictable offense up to 5 years imprisonment) but we often see people facing much lower consequences for not handing over passwords, such as a fine.

- Arrest.

It is likely that you will be arrested (especially if you decide to not comply with aspects of the warrant such as giving over your passwords), but you may not be. The cops may tell you if you 'are compliant' (I.e. hand over your items or passwords more easily) then you won't be arrested – this is often a lie. They will take you regardless if they feel like you will be useful in providing evidence.

Shutting the fuck up

Know that as soon as cops enter your home, everything you do and say is “on the record” **and can and will be used against you.**

The only things you should **say** to say to cops are the following:

- Demands to see the warrant.
- Negotiations about your physical needs, such as needing to go to the toilet, eat or drink, change your clothes, take your medication, **or assert that you are in pain.**
- Urgent arrangements for care of dependents such as children, pets, vulnerable people in your home who you care for etc. (such as needing to drop off your kid to the neighbour, administer medication to your epileptic cat, etc. They will not always allow these kinds of things so making sure you have a back up option should be part of your raid plan.)
- Demands to make your lawyer and personal phone calls.
- In circumstances where it is legally required of you such as in an interview, giving your name and address (**but not your phone number or date of birth!**)

DO NOT ANSWER ANY OTHER QUESTIONS, WHETHER INSIDE OR OUTSIDE THE INTERVIEW ROOM. You can either say ‘no comment’ or simply remain silent.

- Do not engage in small talk with cops or with anyone else in your household.
- Do not tell them where/what things in your home are.
- Do not nod or shake your head.
- Do not make faces or react visibly to their comments.
- Never answer any questions regardless of how innocuous they are.

The cops will try and prime you into being comfortable to talk to them. They will try and ask you how your day is, what you have planned for the day, or where you work. It may feel uncomfortable to say “no comment” to small things, especially under pressure, but it is important to get into the habit. Everything you say conditions you into handing over more information, or provides new information that could incriminate yourself or others. Practice with your community/loved ones/comrades/fellow mischief makers saying “no comment” or remaining silent.

Always assume any person in the cop shop is an informant – including cell mates, or the person who makes you a cup of tea in the interview break. In non activist cases we have seen cops use undercover operatives posing as cell mates to get information. The same undercover operatives then gave the accused a lift home when they were released and managed to make them confess again in the car. No one there is your friend.

Preparing for custody

If you are arrested you should expect to be in custody for a while. If you are woken up from bed you can be in any state of dress (or undress) and you should ask to put on clothes. It is a good idea to wear warm layers (the cells and interview rooms are cold) and something that you feel comfortable in (socks shoes you can slip on and off). Once you are in the watch house they may take things like shoes, belts, strings of hoodies and shoe laces.

Bring documentation (such as a script with your name on it) of any necessary medication, and assert your 'right' to take it during your time in custody. It is routine for you to be denied your medication once you are in custody, or for the pigs to play games with you about accessing your meds.

Custody is awful - you have just been taken from your home, isolated from your community, and put into a place designed to cause complete despair – or put your life at risk. You may not see or hear from a non-pig in hours. This can be really disorienting and exhausting, as well as incredibly dangerous and life-threatening. It is good to plan something you can come back to when your mind goes wandering to the worst places– exercise, memorise police names/faces, think about things that motivate you, remind yourself of the agreements you made and why, sing, do exercise, have a fantasy - anything to make you feel strong and connected to yourself. You are experiencing extreme loss of control over your body but the pigs cannot control your mind. Talk to people with similar experiences to you about their strategies – what you do in custody can help you stay sane, and can also help keep you alive.

Your lawyer is not your friend, or an activist.

You *should* be allowed a phone call to a lawyer when in custody. If you don't already have a lawyer you will be assigned a duty lawyer by the law firm you call (not by the pigs – they will let you waive your 'right' to a lawyer if you don't know how to access one). Duty lawyers are pretty hit or miss but they will only advise you on the day, and you can find other legal representation once you are released. A lawyer can be really useful to help argue with the police

about your rights and proper processes, explain legal concepts/ jargon to you, remind you to say “no comment” during an interview, or argue down awful bail conditions.

When you are in custody, it can be comforting to speak to someone who is not a pig, and it is normal to want someone to reassure you that things will be okay, **but your lawyer is not that person.** Your lawyer does not have liberation work or the needs of your cause at the heart of their work - nor are they concerned about your friends/comrades/partners in mischief. They are motivated to get you out of custody as quickly as possible, get you a lighter sentence, get their work done quickly, get paid, and uphold the validity of the colonial “justice” system. The lawyer you call may provide advice that they see as beneficial for you, but they operate on an **assumption** of your “needs” that **does not necessarily benefit the movement or people you love and work with.**

A lawyer also cannot advise you to do something illegal. This means they will tell you to hand your passcode over to the cops if there is a warrant for it. **Do not follow your lawyer’s advice about passwords.** Trust that you know what is best – prioritise your promises to your community and partners in mischief over the advice given to you by a lawyer.

Say no to things by default

Police will tell you have to do a lot of things in custody. Do not believe what police say to you: **they will always lie to you** in order to manipulate you. If you forget at any point what you actually legally required to do, it’s good to refuse something by default.

Here are some things you can say no to while in custody:

- You are **NOT** obligated to have a mugshot taken (a mugshot gives the police a high resolution picture of your face).
- You are **NOT** obligated to have your height measured.
- You are **NOT** obligated to tell them your mobile number.
- You do **NOT** have to sign the paper listing your possessions in custody (the police *should* return your belongings regardless of you signing this).
- You can **TRY** to say no to being interviewed by “waiving your right to be interviewed”. The police may interview you anyway. Waiving your interview can mean you do not have to go through interrogation, BUT can mean you have less information about what the pigs know (or think they know) about your involvement.

The only things you ‘must’ give are your name, address, fingerprints and DNA (for DNA, if there is a court order!) It can be useful to make it as difficult as possible for the police to get good quality DNA and fingerprints. The only thing you must sign is your bail conditions paper (if you are released on bail.)

Consider contesting your bail conditions

If you are going to be released on bail, police will often hit you with extreme bail conditions – including non-association orders with co-accuseds, curfews, gag orders, areas you cannot visit, or reporting to a police station multiple times a week. All of these can isolate, punish, and exhaust you, and imprison you if you break them. You have to sign your bail conditions to be released from custody.

If you do not accept your bail conditions, you can tell the police you will not sign the paper. The police will hold you until you agree on bail conditions. You can contest your bail conditions by arguing directly with the police about them. The police may refuse your demands, at which point they will take you to the court and you can argue in front of a magistrate. **The bail magistrates tend to be much more lenient than the cops, and are often likely to give you more lenient bail conditions.** However, this can mean you will be in custody for longer, which is life-threatening for some people.

While refusing your bail conditions is scary, it can be immensely successful. Activists in Naarm have had success fighting their bail conditions both by arguing with police and escalating to the magistrate. If it is safe for you to stay in custody long enough to contest the conditions, **we recommend trying to contest.**

If you do not wish to contest your bail conditions on the spot, you can sign restrictive bail conditions in order to get released more quickly, and then later work with a lawyer to have your bail conditions changed. However, this can take a really long time - a few weeks or months of dealing with restrictive conditions - and you will have to go to court.

POST RAID

You have just gone through an extremely traumatic experience. Framing a raid as a state-sanctioned home invasion, robbery, and armed kidnapping has been useful to give people language for how fucked the experience is. Be compassionate with yourself and let your community hold you.

Disseminate information ASAP to people who need to know

As truly awful as a raid is, it is never just about you. Raids and repression also impact everyone around you, especially when your phone is taken, or your life is combed through to find evidence. **Tell the truth as quickly and as safely as possible to people who need to know.** Tell them how the raid occurred, what evidence the cops have, what they took, and what tactics they used. Share the warrant you were given (feel free to redact sensitive personal details that may overly identify you, such as legal/birth name etc), and share the recording of your interview with people who need to know what was asked. Letting people you work with see how you did or did not answer questions helps people to get all the information they may need to protect themselves. In addition, if you know you are sharing the recording with friends later, you are more motivated to stay staunch in saying “no comment” and feel less alone in the interview room.

Information is power. Raids can be useful sources of information for us too – about how police are operating, what their priorities and focuses are, who is working with them.

You are now definitely known to police as an activist

After a raid, you are likely to be under state surveillance. Regardless of legality or your innocence, your home may be bugged, you may be tracked, and your networks monitored. You should be careful about what you are saying, where you are going, and who you are saying things to. Act as though what you say inside the place that was raided will be known to police, as well as in your car, and of course around any devices with microphones. Talk with your friends/comrades/partners in mischief about what they think you can and can't say in these bugged places, and how best to stay in contact with them.

The fear and reality of surveillance is designed to further the abuse of the state, and to gather more evidence and information against you. Know that taking measures to protect against surveillance is not only to protect you but your friends and the movement itself.

Lean on your support networks

You will likely need a lot of care after your raid. This type of care might look like:

- Food cooked for you, or groceries dropped to you
- Help cleaning your house

- Financial help for broken or stolen items (such as bashed doors, or stolen laptops)
- New phones to communicate with your networks
- Assistance with admin tasks, such as regaining access to accounts
- Emotional support, debriefs, a shoulder to cry on, and psychological help
- Legal advice and support going to court
- Tasks to stay busy and maintain purpose

Consider sharing this list – with your own additions – to friends and comrades post-raid. We are all safer if we are cared for.

Try not to isolate. It is so easy to go into a self-fulfilling spiral of isolation when you are acting to protect yourself and community from surveillance and police violence. The state wants to isolate us through non association orders and for us to isolate ourselves through fear and depression until we can be coerced into giving up the fight. Take your time, you are never alone. You may choose to not associate with certain people in public for a while, so consider who your public friendships are, who can come to court with you, hang around at your house, and stay with you in the nights post-raid.

Make a safety plan. Talk to the people who can support you about what you may need in a mental health crisis. Tell them what you are comfortable telling them about warning signs and what to do if/when that happens. Processing trauma can take time. You may feel OK in the immediate aftermath and months later find yourself struggling.

Consider how to retain a sense of self and purpose. What ongoing projects can you be a part of even under state repression? How can

you continue to engage in projects safely? How do you prioritise the safety of others? What brings you joy outside of activist projects?

We hope this has been helpful for you!

This has been informed by shared personal experiences. Another edition will be published as more information comes out, and we'd love to hear your additions and corrections. We admit that there's no easy way to contact us, but we're sure feedback can get around ;).

Stay staunch, stay careful, stay connected.

The colony will fall.

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