

PERSONAL SAFETY SUGGESTIONS

AT HOME

1. Have your door keys immediately available.
 2. Look around and take notice of any strangers hanging around. If the situation doesn't seem normal, don't enter your residence.
 3. If you notice a broken window or torn screen or if your door is ajar, don't enter your residence. Go somewhere safe and notify the police.
 4. Make sure that there are lights at all entrances and that all entrance lights are functioning.
- #### Doors and Their Locks
1. All doors should be solid and sturdy. Outside doors are much more secure with correctly mounted deadbolts. A deadbolt lock with a one-inch throw is difficult to pry or jimmy.
 2. If your door has glass within 40 inches of the lock, a double cylinder deadbolt will prevent an intruder from being able to open the lock after breaking the glass.
 3. **Never** rely on a chain lock as a security device.
 4. If any doors have hinges on the outside, it's much safer to replace them with nonremovable hinges.
 5. Sliding glass doors need added security. The most common way to enhance security is to wedge the sliding door with a metal rod to prevent entry even if the lock is picked or broken. Another option is to wedge a wooden rod in the bottom inside track.
 6. When you move into a new home or apartment have the locks changed.
 7. Don't give keys to maintenance or delivery people.
 8. Don't hide your keys outside.
 9. Consult your local hardware store or police department for more thorough information about doors and locks.
- ### Windows
1. Always use curtains, drapes, and/or blinds on windows at night.
 2. The double hung window is easy to jimmy open or open by breaking the glass and opening the lock. Through the use of a nail or pin insertion and a barrel or slide bolt, these windows can be secured.
 3. For particularly vulnerable windows, you may want to consider installing grates or grills. Make sure grates are equipped with a quick release feature for emergency exits.
- #### Inside Your Residence
1. For maximum safety, lock all doors. When sleeping, make sure all doors and windows are locked.
 2. At night, leave a light on in each level of your home. Alternate these lights.
 3. Keep a phone near your bed, along with a list of emergency phone numbers. You may also want a flashlight close by. If you wear glasses, have them within reach.
 4. Don't advertise that you live alone. In the phone book or on your mailbox, use your first initial and last name instead of your entire name.
- #### Answering Your Door
1. Never open your door without first looking or asking who is there.
 2. Always require identification from service, repair, and salespeople and from police officers. If you have any doubts, call the company or agency to verify the identity.
 3. **Never** rely on a chain lock as a security device.
 4. Document the day and time of any obscene phone calls in the event that a pattern develops. Obscene phone calls may be reported to the police and phone company.
- #### Answering Your Phone
1. Never give out personal information over the phone or reveal that you are home alone.
 2. Hang up as soon as you are aware that a call is obscene.
 3. Don't yell obscenities back into the phone.
 4. Document the day and time of any obscene phone calls in the event that a pattern develops. Obscene phone calls may be reported to the police and phone company.
- #### Leaving Your Residence
1. Lock all doors and windows.
 2. Connect lamps to automatic timers that will activate lights in the evening.
 3. When going on vacation, cancel newspaper and other deliveries. Have a trusted relative, friend, or neighbor collect your mail or notify the post office to hold your mail until you return. Also, make arrangements to have your lawn mowed or snow shoveled. Finally, leave shades, blinds, and draperies in their usual positions.

WALKING

1. Plan and know your route in advance.
2. Be alert to your surroundings; take notice of who is walking toward you and if someone is walking behind you.
3. Take busy, well-lit streets.
4. Walk assertively; look confident and purposeful.
5. Never take short-cuts through alleys or isolated streets.
6. Know what businesses and stores on your route are open late or all night; determine police and fire department locations along this route.
7. Women: hold your purse securely and firmly; men: don't carry your wallet in the back pocket of your trousers. It may be helpful to use a fanny pack/waist pouch that can be hidden under your clothing and free your arms. Carry only what you need.
8. If possible, don't walk alone.
9. Walk in the middle of the sidewalk neither too close to the curb and parked cars nor too close to buildings, alley entrances, or shrubbery.
10. Don't wear a headset/walkman when walking. Your sense of hearing will be limited, possibly making you vulnerable.
11. Walk facing the traffic so you can see approaching vehicles.
12. Keep your keys in your hand, ready for use.
13. Dress for freedom of movement.
14. If you are followed by a car, turn and walk in the opposite direction. Try to obtain the car's license number.
15. If you are followed by someone on foot, cross the street and change direction. Immediately go to a public area and seek help.
16. You might want to consider carrying a whistle or a flashlight.
17. Don't walk through groups of people. Walk around them if possible.
18. If walking in an unfamiliar area and you become lost, don't walk around looking bewildered. Try to appear as though you know where you are going.
19. Be wary of strangers who stop their cars and ask for directions.
20. Don't hitchhike.



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A Guide to

PERSONAL SAFETY



Personal Safety is being aware of the problem of crime and taking action to protect yourself from crime. Although the only people who can prevent crime are the criminals, there are many strategies you can use to reduce your risk of being victimized. It is important to remember that crimes occur when the criminal can easily find an opportunity to carry out the crime. For example, a criminal may see an opportunity to commit a crime when he or she discovers an unlocked or inadequately locked door. When considering your safety it's helpful to think in terms of what opportunities a criminal could take advantage of to get **you** or **your possessions**, and then think of what you can do to reduce or eliminate these opportunities.

Many of us have lived for years with a lack of personal safety awareness and, fortunately, nothing has happened. You need to choose what chances you are willing or not willing to take. This information will help you in the decision-making process. Keep in mind that there are no guarantees that a personal crime won't become a part of your life experience or that implementing any or all of these strategies will **always** ensure your safety. However, you **can** make a commitment to yourself that you will do everything you can to maximize your safety.

If you have already been victimized or are victimized in the future, remember that **it's not your fault!** Our laws state that no one has the right to violate another person or another person's belongings. The legal burden of a crime and, in fact, **all** responsibility for the crime rests with the offender. The victim is never to blame for the crime.

PERSONAL SAFETY SUGGESTIONS

APARTMENT DWELLERS

1. Report any suspicious activities to the building manager.
2. Notify the building manager when security improvements are needed.
3. Don't go to a laundromat alone.
4. Be cautious when on elevators. Stand near the control panel. Get off immediately if someone exhibits suspicious behavior. Press all floor buttons in an emergency. Ride with a group of people if possible.

YOUR CAR

Approaching Your Car

1. Look around to notice if anyone unfamiliar is hanging around your car.
2. Have your car keys in hand to immediately unlock your car.
3. Look in the back seat of your car to be certain no one is hiding there.
4. Lock the doors once you are inside your car and keep the windows rolled up.

DRIVING

1. Know what businesses and store on your route are open late or all night; determine police and fire department locations along this route.
2. Don't take chances with your car. Make sure your car is in working order so as to avoid breakdowns. If your car isn't running smoothly, have it checked and, if necessary, repaired as soon as possible.
3. Don't risk running out of gas. Maintain at least half a tank of gas in your car.
4. Keep your purse or wallet out of sight while driving.
5. Be cautious when stopped at stop signs and traffic lights.
6. If someone bumps you in an isolated area, don't stop and get out. Continue driving to a public area or police station. Report this incident to the police.
7. If a car follows you, don't drive home. Drive to the nearest police station or open business for help.
8. If you have car trouble, raise the hood and then stay inside the car with the doors locked. Turn on your emergency flashers and display a "call police" banner or a white cloth. If someone stops to assist you, don't get out of your car. Roll down the window slightly and ask the person to call the police or a tow service.
9. Don't stop for a flat tire, particularly if you're on a dark highway. It doesn't cost much to replace a metal rim and you won't harm your car. Turn on your emergency flashers and creep along the shoulder to the nearest service station or other safe place.
10. Don't pick up hitchhikers.

PARKING YOUR CAR

1. Park in well-lighted areas. Make sure that the parking lot lights will be on when you return to your car.
2. Keep valuables out of sight (e.g. in the trunk).
3. Use extra caution when parking in underground or enclosed garages.
4. Leave only the ignition key with a parking lot attendant.
5. Don't label keys with name or address.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

1. Use well-lighted, busy bus stops.
2. Don't wait alone; join others at a nearby stop.
3. Don't discuss financial matters or travel plans in public.
4. Don't expose large amounts of cash in public.
5. Use caution at automatic teller machines, particularly at night.
6. If you receive social security or other similar checks, ask your bank about a direct deposit program. With your payment automatically deposited to your account, you avoid the problems of lost or stolen checks.
7. When shopping, don't burden yourself with too many packages.

SAFETY AT WORK

1. Keep wallets and purses out of sight. If possible, keep them in a locked drawer or closet.
2. If you leave work late at night, walk with another coworker or with a group of colleagues.
3. Challenge any unknown person in your work area.
4. If you see someone suspicious outside of your work place, inform security or call the police.
5. Make suggestions to your employer regarding improved safety conditions.

SPECIAL CONCERNS

HOTELS AND MOTELS

1. Leave valuables in a safe at the desk, not in your room or luggage.
2. Always keep your room key with you.
3. Keep the door locked, using all locks, when you're in your room.
4. Request that your room number not be given out.
5. When you enter your room, check for intruders **before** you lock the door. You don't want to cut off your only way to escape.
6. At meetings and conventions, remove your nametag before you leave.

JOGGING, BIKING, AND OTHER OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

1. Choose a route in advance that is safe and well-populated.
2. Vary your route and schedule so that your behavior isn't predictable.
3. If possible, avoid outdoor activities at night.
4. Become familiar with the businesses and stores on your route, as well as the locations of police and fire departments.
5. Keep your equipment in good condition and carry the appropriate tools for emergencies.
6. Consider carrying a whistle or shriek alarm.

WEAPONS

1. It's best not to carry weapons, unless you're thoroughly trained in and experienced with their use. Weapons may be taken from you and used against you.
2. Your best "weapon" is your mind – your own judgment and mental readiness. You may be able to avoid dangerous situations by **trusting your instincts**. If a person or situation makes you uncomfortable or seems dangerous, don't worry about embarrassing yourself or others, hurting someone else's feelings, or appearing strange. **Listen** to yourself and **trust** your instincts and feelings.
3. You may already have common objects with you that can serve as "weapons." For example: a lighted cigarette, hairspray, perfume, an umbrella, a pencil or pen, a nail file, or a book.

IF CONFRONTED

In any situation, your goal is to get away with the least injury to yourself.

1. Distance yourself from the attacker.
2. Evaluate the situation:
 - Does the attacker have a weapon?
 - Are sources of help nearby?
 - Is the attacker alone?
 - Is the attacker under the influence of drugs?
3. Stay as calm as possible.
4. Decide how you want to respond. Studies show that your chances of escaping improve when you use a variety of defense measures. Passive defense measures such as pleading, crying, and arguing are not likely to be effective.
 - Consider:
 - negotiating.
 - stalling for time.
 - distracting or diverting the assailant and then fleeing.
 - verbal assertiveness.
 - yelling to attract attention. A powerful "No!" or "Get away from me!" is more effective than yelling "Help!" Many attackers will flee as soon as you make a loud noise because they don't want to attract attention.
 - Physically resisting. Act quickly. A kick, punch, bite, or squeeze to the knee, nose, eye, or groin may disable the attacker long enough for you to get away. Fighting may also convince the attacker that trying to harm you isn't worth the trouble.
5. Stay alert. Listen and observe so that you will be able to provide important information and evidence later.
6. If all the attacker wants are your valuables, give them up! Possessions can be replaced – your life can't.
7. Remember: each situation is different. Only **YOU** can decide what action is best.
8. If attacked, tell someone. Report the assault to the police, the Center for Victim Assistance, or a friend or family member. Or, go directly to a hospital.

A FINAL NOTE

The victim of a crime is never to blame for her/his victimization. If a crime has happened to you, you have the right to ask for and receive help.