



Personal Safety Tips for Women



Awareness, of one's surroundings and reacting to gut instincts is key to reducing the risks of becoming victim to robbery or assault.

When Out and About

- Stay alert, avoid becoming immersed in or distracted by personal handheld devices. If wearing headphones consider one earpiece and have volume low enough to hear around you. Stand tall and demonstrate confidence. Avoid shortcuts or walking in or near alleys; avoid unfamiliar areas. Avoid going out alone at night. Be alert for suspicious persons, especially around banks, stores and vehicles. Carry a whistle or personal safety alarm to alert others if trouble finds you. Carry a cell phone to call for help without having to look for a phone booth
- If you think someone is following you, cross the street and walk in the opposite direction. Try to get a good look at the person or their /vehicle (including licence plate). Go to the nearest public place to call the police.
- Do not accept rides from strangers. Do not hitchhike. Do not respond to comments from strangers on the street.
- If you feel uncomfortable while walking, find someone you know who will go out with you, or plan a route along busy streets where there will be other people in the vicinity.
- Use caution in parking lots. Park in well lit areas. Have your keys ready before getting to the vehicle. Visually inspect the interior of the vehicle before getting in. Keep all doors locked, even when inside the vehicle. If someone tries to get into the vehicle while you're driving, continue to drive off - if unable to do this, hold down on your horn to alert other people to the situation.
- When using ATM machines, if anything appears suspicious use a different machine. Use well-lit machines after dark. Do not use a machine if someone is hanging around. If no money comes out, check the money slot for blockages and notify the bank immediately.
- When entering an access controlled building / parkade do not allow other people or vehicles to follow in behind you, even if you know the person / vehicle. Ensure the door or gate closes completely behind you before you walk/drive away. Do not prop exterior doors open.

At a Club or Party

- Do not allow alcohol (or drugs) to impair your judgment. If you are going to drink, do so responsibly. Never let your drink out of your sight. Do not accept drinks from people you do not know. Never take drinks from open bottles or punch bowls. If in doubt, throw it out. While "date rape" drugs have been gaining in popularity, alcohol still accounts for the majority of sexual assaults where the victim is unconscious during the attack.
- Avoid going to clubs or parties alone. Go out with friends and have a plan to stay together and leave together if someone should feel unwell. Think before leaving with a stranger, especially if feeling intoxicated or unwell. If you meet someone new, arrange to have coffee the next day, rather than leaving with them.

Purse Safety

- Carry purses in a manner that allows you to let go of it. Straps placed across the shoulder, around the neck, or wrapped around the wrist can cause injury if one is not able to free themselves from their purse during an attack. Clasp the purse close to your body, tucked in the bend of your elbow. If someone attempts to snatch your purse, let go of it – scream to draw attention to the criminal.
- When dining out, place your purse on your lap, draping it on the back of a chair makes it an easy target for criminals. When shopping, do not leave a purse unattended in a shopping cart, counter, or change room. When at work, do not leave purses in plain view – lock it in a drawer or cabinet.
- Minimize the amount of money, credit cards and valuables carried in purses, taking only items that you require for daily activities.
- Carry keys separate from your purse. If your purse is snatched, you will still be able to get into your car and home. This also prevents criminals from gaining access to your home with keys and address information found on identification documents in your purse.

If Stalked or Attacked

- If being stalked or harassed, notify the police immediately. Do not engage in conversation with the stalker. Keep a written record of everything - tell friends, relatives, employers, co-workers or anyone else who witnesses an incident, and can keep a record of the incidents. Change your daily routines and travel routes as much as possible. Develop a secret code with people you speak to regularly on the phone to indicate you are in danger. Do not throw away or delete anything the stalker sends you - these items can be used as evidence by the police.
- Safety first, if attacked, comply with the attacker's wishes - if they want you to turn over cash and valuables do so as these items can be replaced. Try to remain calm throughout, becoming hysterical may make the situation worse and put the attacker more on edge. If you are being physically or sexually assaulted, try to get attention. Scream loudly for help. Try to remember details about the person's appearance, such as their height, age, hair or eye colour, or any tattoos or scars. Report the incident immediately.