



Personal Safety

There are easy ways to look out for yourself.

Some of us live in cities. Others of us in remoter locations. Wherever we are, few people feel completely safe anymore. You need to consider your personal safety. Many threatening situations can be diffused early if we simply empower ourselves with knowledge. Like knowing that we can avoid personal attack with the right body language. Or making pacts with our neighbours to look out for each other. Simple yet powerful solutions can help make your world a safer place. Read on.

STREET SENSE

1. **Send the right message.** When you walk, project confidence and calm; appear to have a destination.
2. **Know the neighborhoods where you live and work.** Know locations of police and fire stations, public telephones and hospitals, and restaurants or stores that are open late.
3. **Trust your instincts.** If something or someone makes you uneasy, avoid the person or leave.

WALKING

1. **Stick to well-traveled streets.** Avoid shortcuts through wooded areas, parking lots, or alleys.
2. **Don't flash the cash.** Money is a tempting target, so is jewelry or clothing.
3. **Hold it close.** Carry a purse close to your body, not by the straps. Put a wallet in an inside coat or front pants pocket, not a back pocket or side jacket pocket.
4. **Bank by day.** Try to use cash machines in the daytime. Have your card ready, and don't approach the machine if you're uneasy about people nearby.
5. **Be fit to fly.** Don't wear shoes or clothing that restrict your movements.
6. **Don't fumble around.** Have your car or house key in hand before you reach the door.
7. **Surprise them.** If you think someone is following you, switch direction or cross the street. Walk toward an open store, restaurant, or lighted house. If you're scared, yell your lungs out.
8. **Leave in two's.** If you work late, make sure others are in the building and ask someone - a colleague or security guard - to walk you to your car, bus, or subway stop.

DRIVING

1. **Don't get stuck.** Keep your car in good running order. Make sure there's always enough gas.
2. **Windows up. Doors locked.** Even if you're coming right back, roll up the windows and lock the doors. Check inside and out before getting in.
3. **Be smart!** Avoid parking in isolated areas. Stay aware in lots and underground parking garages.
4. **Calmly lead them to the police.** If you think someone is following you, don't head home. Drive to the nearest police or fire station, gas station, or other open business to get help.
5. **Don't pick up hitchhikers.** Don't hitchhike.

OF BUSES, LRT'S, AND SUBWAYS

1. **Use well-lighted, busy stops.**
2. **Don't doze or daydream.**
3. **Assert yourself.** If someone harasses you, loudly say "Leave me alone!" If that doesn't work hit the emergency device.
4. **Watch who gets off with you.** If you feel uneasy, walk directly to where there are other people.

IF SOMEONE TRIES TO ROB YOU

1. **Don't resist.** Give up property and save your life.
2. **Report the crime.**
3. **"Yes, he had an unusual tattoo...."** Memorizing traits and characteristics about your attacker can help police find the person later on.

TAKE A STAND

1. **Make your neighborhood and workplace safer.** Report broken street lights, clean up parks and vacant lots, and lobby local government for better lighting in public places. It's your right. Make it your obligation.
2. **Be the solution.** Join a Neighborhood, Apartment, or Office Watch to look out for others. Call the police in your area to find out how you can organize a neighborhood watch.
3. **Do unto others.** Even if it's simply calling the police on someone else's behalf, your actions can help others from becoming victims of robbery and assault.
4. **Your help is the easiest thing to give.** Lend a hand or an ear to a friend or co-worker who has been a victim of crime. Cook a meal, baby-sit, or call victim services or a crisis hotline. Listen, sympathize, and don't blame.
5. **See the big picture.** Realize that tolerance, equality, and the elimination of poverty, along with better drug treatment services, crime and drug abuse prevention education, and job and recreational opportunities for young people in your community, will make the world a better and safer place. Vote for improvements.

Outdoor activity and exercise.

Staying fit is important, and there's no better place to exercise than outside. Whether you run, rollerblade, walk, bike, hike, or stroll, here are safety tips that will help keep you in the prime of health.

BEFORE YOU GO

1. **Tell somebody.** Let people know where you are going and when you will return.
2. **"Which way did they go?"** Give friends and family details on where you plan to exercise.
3. **Know the terrain.** Create a mental map of where telephones are located along your route.
4. **Don't flaunt it.** Leave jewelry and cash behind.
5. **Be seen.** Wear reflective material.
6. **Carry ID.** Carry a driver's license. If you don't have a place to carry your ID, write your name, phone number, and blood type on the inside of your athletic shoe. Include medical information.

ON THE ROAD

1. **Tell somebody.** Let people know where you are going and when you will return. Tell a family member or friend where you are going and the time you expect to be back.
2. **Stay alert.** The more aware you are, the less vulnerable you are.
3. **Run together.** Run or walk with a partner or with a dog.
4. **Don't wear headphones.** Listen to your surroundings instead for approaching cars or potential attackers.
5. **Exercise in familiar territory.** Know which businesses or stores are open. Vary your route.
6. **Run where it's clear and the light is good.** Avoid unpopulated areas, deserted streets, and unfrequented trails. Avoid poorly lighted areas at night.
7. **Run clear of parked cars or bushes**
8. **Run against traffic.** This is the best way to observe oncoming automobiles.
9. **"Sticks and stones...."** Ignore verbal harassment.
10. **Carry a lifeline.** A cellular phone is your best friend in an emergency.
11. Be observant and don't avert your eyes, but keep your distance and keep moving.
12. **Trust your instincts.** Your intuition about a person or an area happens for a reason. Avoid areas you feel unsure about.
13. **Answer from a distance.** Be careful if anyone in a car asks you for direction. If you feel safe enough to answer, keep more than a full arm's length away from the car.
14. **Surprise is on your side.** If you think you're being followed, change direction and head for open stores and where there are other people who can help you.
15. **Don't fumble around.** Have your door key ready before you reach your home.
16. **Call a cop.** If something happens to you or someone else, or you notice anyone out of the ordinary, call the police. Your local authorities are also a great resource for finding out about criminal activity in the area where you plan to run.

Runners, stay alert.

Getting in the zone doesn't mean zoning out. Sometimes runners and walkers get so focused they lose track of what's going on around them. This can make them more vulnerable to attacks. If you get bored running without music, practice a useful game of memorizing characteristics of strangers and license plates.

RUNNING AND WALKING

1. **Be seen.** Think about where you are going and how well lighted it may or may not be. Wear reflective material.
2. **Stay out of the shadows.** Dawn and dusk offer darkness for muggers and other crooks.
3. **Watch the road.** Wet or icy spots are harder to see in the dark.

WHEN YOU'RE AWAY FROM HOME

1. **Ask.** Check with the concierge for safe exercise routes. See if the hotel can arrange access to a health club or gym.
2. **Know your route well.** Get a map and study it.
3. **"Where are you staying?"** Remember the street address of the hotel. Carry your hotel's business card along with personal identification.
4. **Let them help.** Leave your room key with the front desk. Let them know you're out.
5. **Plan for many happy returns.** Being smart and careful can make your next trip much safer.