SAFETY

Victoria and the UVic campus are generally very safe, but it is important to be aware of available resources and the actions you can take to stay healthy and avoid hazardous situations while studying at UVic.

Resources

Emergency Assistance
In Canada, you can report an emergency anytime and anywhere by phoning 9-1-1. An operator will ask you to choose police, fire or ambulance and will ask what city you are in. Interpreting services are available on request. The operator will transfer you. Do not hang up!

More information about emergency assistance is available at www.uvic.ca/emergency.

Non-Emergency Assistance
HealthLink BC provides non-emergency health information and advice. Access this service anytime by phoning 8-1-1 or by visiting www.healthlinkbc.ca. Interpreting services are available on request.

The following on-campus units provide resources to support your health and safety:

- Campus Security Services  www.uvic.ca/security
- University Health Services  www.uvic.ca/health
- Counselling Services  www.uvic.ca/counselling
- Judicial Affairs  www.uvic.ca/judicial
- Equity and Human Rights  www.uvic.ca/eqhr

Actions

Emergency Planning
Do you know what to do before, during and after an emergency? Planning ahead will help you stay safe when the time comes. Information is available at www.crd.bc.ca/prepare-yourself/get-prepared and www.uvic.ca/emergency.

Register for UVic Emergency Alerts at www.uvic.ca/alerts and update your contact information on UVic My Page.

Outdoor Activities

- Consult the British Columbia Cycling Coalition’s website for information about safe riding practices and cycling courses for adults and children: www.bikesense.bc.ca.
- Cyclists are required by law to wear a helmet at all times and to use both a front headlight and a rear light at night.
- Victoria is surrounded by the ocean, so we encourage all students to learn about water safety.
- Swimming in the ocean and in lakes is different from swimming in pools and is often more challenging. Be aware of your abilities and limitations.
- Vikes Recreation offers swimming lessons for adults and children: www.vikesrec.ca.
- Boaters are required by law to carry marine safety equipment. Check the forecast before setting out, and pay attention to the weather. Be alert for wave, wind and cloud changes that signal bad weather approaching.
- Plan carefully before going on a hike. Make sure you are physically fit enough to enjoy your hiking activity. Wear proper clothing and footwear. Carry water and food. Let someone know where you are going and when you plan to return.

International Student Services

uvic.ca/iss  |  International Student Centre UVC B272  |  250-721-6361  |  issinfo@uvic.ca
**Theft Prevention**
Record serial or identity numbers and engrave or mark valuable items. Keep your passport, important documents, money and electronics in a safe place. Do not leave your belongings unattended in public places. Bicycle theft is common, so invest in a solid lock.

**Home Safety**
Do not put your name or address on your keys. Replace locks if your keys are lost or stolen. Keep your doors and windows locked. Never let a stranger into your home. A smoke alarm is a very important piece of safety equipment. It is designed to alert you to fires so you can escape. Make sure your home has a smoke alarm. Test the smoke alarm every month, replace the batteries once a year, keep it clear of dust and do not cover it or paint it.

**Vehicle Safety**
If you intend to drive a vehicle in BC, consult the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia (ICBC) website: [www.icbc.com](http://www.icbc.com).
Do not use a handheld device such as a mobile phone while driving. Do not accept rides from strangers or offer a ride to someone you just met. Do not drink alcohol and drive. It is a very serious offence in Canada. If you drink alcohol, get a ride from a friend who has not been drinking, call a taxi or take the bus. Do not leave valuables visible in the car. Store them in the trunk. Keep the doors, windows, sunroof and trunk closed and locked when not in use. Always wear a seatbelt!

**Alcohol and Drugs**
In Canada, it is against the law to use, buy or sell illegal drugs. Please be aware that although marijuana may be considered socially acceptable, it has not yet been legalized. It is also against the law to carry open alcohol in public places and in a vehicle. Each province and territory sets its own legal drinking age. In BC, the legal drinking age is 19. You will need government issued photo identification to enter bars and pubs. Never leave your drink unattended and do not accept drinks from strangers. Please remember that each of us is responsible for our behaviour while drinking and for any bad decisions we make, even if we are drunk.

**Personal Safety**
Do not give personal information like your name, address or telephone number to a stranger. When meeting someone new, ask a friend to join you or plan to meet in a public place. Trust your instincts. If you feel uncomfortable or unsafe, leave immediately. When walking after dark, plan your route. Keep your head up and be aware of your surroundings. If possible, walk with someone you know and trust. Learn the location of phones on campus that direct dial to Campus Security Services and make use of their Safe Haven, Safe Walk and Campus Alone programs: [www.uvic.ca/security](http://www.uvic.ca/security).

**Relationships**
Cultural and language barriers can sometimes lead to communication challenges and misinterpreted behaviours. When you start dating someone, be clear about your limits and respect their limits. NO means NO! If you feel scared or unsafe, if you want someone to stop contacting you or if you want a relationship to end, say NO. Be direct and firm. No one has the right to contact you or touch you after you tell them to stop. Information about sexualized violence and the importance of consent is available on the Judicial Affairs website: [www.uvic.ca/judicial](http://www.uvic.ca/judicial).

**Fraud Prevention**
Attempted fraud is often referred to as a scam. Scams can happen over the telephone, through the mail, by text, online or in person. Some scams will ask you for money. Other scams will ask you for sensitive personal information which can be used to access your financial accounts or email accounts or to steal your identity. Scams often appear to come from well-known businesses, institutions or government agencies. They may even appear to come from UVic! Learn more about fraud and tips for protecting yourself: [www.antifraudcentre-centreantifraude.ca](http://www.antifraudcentre-centreantifraude.ca).