

Personal Security At Home

Campus Security Services Emergency Number: 721-7599

PERSONAL SECURITY AT HOME

(from Campus Security Services Brochure #8)

in the home or apartment

on the telephone

on the street

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In the home or apartment

Do not leave your shades or draperies closed during the day when you are out. Drawn window coverings are a solid clue that no one is home.

Create some sort of noise in the home before you leave (an empty house is a silent house). For example, place a radio, with the volume turned low, at a front window.

Leave one or two inexpensive toys or garden tools scattered about. DO NOT leave unlocked bicycles outside (they are a clue to the carelessness of the house owners, which may suggest other precautions have been neglected).

Always close and lock garage doors before you drive away; an empty garage is a strong sign of an empty house.

Never leave a note in the door for anyone explaining that you are out for lunch, have gone shopping, etc., -- this advertises the fact that you are not home.

Never leave valuable clothing, rugs, etc. on a clothesline unless you are there to watch them - this is dangling bait before a thief.

In winter, never leave foot or tire tracks in the snow that only show people leaving. Walk or drive the car back and forth to indicate arrival as well as departure.

Never hide a key outside your home or apartment - under a mat, over a door, beneath a flower pot, etc. If there must be another key available, leave it with a trusted neighbour.

Keep the shrubbery trimmed near your doors and windows so that they are visible from the street.

. **Keep your grass cut**, your leaves raked, etc., indicating that your house is well cared for.

. **Always have lights—preferably in more than one room—turned on when you are away at night.** (An inexpensive timer will accomplish this automatically).

. **Never leave small valuable articles (watches, jewellery, cameras, typewriters, cassettes, etc.) on window sills**, on shelves near windows or in places easily visible from the outside. Money, stocks, bonds and as many other valuables as possible should be kept in banks and safety deposit boxes.

. **Keep a light in your bathroom all night long**, indicating, even when you are at home, that someone is awake.

. **Empty your mailbox** or arrange to have it emptied as soon as mail is delivered. Avoid slant-type mailboxes as they lend themselves to incidents of vandalism.

. **Never have your marital status or your first or middle name on your nameplate or listed in the phone book.** (Miss Jane Ellen Logan, for instance, should immediately be changed to 'J. Logan').

. **Get to know your neighbours.** They want to be safe too, and you can help one another by being alert to anything unusual that occurs in the area.

. **Record descriptions and serial numbers of power tools, outboard motors, television sets, stereos, etc.** Have pictures taken of jewelry. Register these with your police department and insurance company, and indicate that you have done so with a sign that is provided for pasting on your door.

. **The best protection for home security is a dog.** If you happen to have a lovable but cowardly dog, consider buying a second one for protection. Give your dog access to all rooms in your house.

- . **Never turn your dog on an intruder** - the dog may be knifed or maimed, instead keep the dog close to you for protection.
- . **If you employ a babysitter, explain all the precautionary rules you follow** and insist, for her safety and the safety of your children, that she follow them as well.
- . **Never admit a stranger into your apartment lobby** when you are entering the building (even if the stranger turns out to be a tenant. He will appreciate your caution).
- . **If there is a Tenant's Association in your apartment building, join it**, but don't depend on it alone for your security.
- . **Persuade your landlord to have unprotected mailboxes moved to a wall behind the locked door to the lobby** - mail thefts of unemployment insurance and welfare cheques and the like are common.
- . **Ask your landlord to install bright lights in all corridors** if they are not there. If he won't comply, chip in with other tenants and buy bright bulbs. If he objects, call the Residential Tenancy Branch and complain.
- . **Ask your landlord if he will remove all draperies from the lobby**, which may hide someone lying in wait for a tenant.
- . **An elevator is like any form of shared transportation.** Don't enter one with anyone who makes you feel uneasy. If he enters on an intermediate floor, simply walk out of the elevator.
- . **Stand next to the control panel in the elevator.** If accosted, push the alarm button or several floor buttons.
- . **Double-lock your apartment door** even if you are only visiting a neighbour next door.
- . **Keep a list posted of places where you can get emergency help** in the building if you need it - the building manager, a neighbour, the building alarm button, etc.
- . **When apartment hunting, remember that ground floor apartments** with sliding doors and windows are particularly vulnerable to illegal entry.
- . **Always be psychologically prepared to protect yourself;** ask yourself, "What if? What if I find the lock on my front door has been

tampered with? What if we go inside and find that someone has ransacked the place?" The answer is to GET OUT, GO TO A NEARBY TELEPHONE AND CALL THE POLICE.

- . **If you can't get out, try to signal a neighbour**, throw one of your shoes through a window; just the noise may frighten a burglar away.

- . **If someone should enter your bedroom while you are in bed**, pretend that you are asleep, as long as the person does not come near you.

- . **If someone is prowling outside your house, make noise which indicates that several people are at home.** Call to an imaginary person in the house: "Dear, there's someone outside". Call the police. If it is dark, be sure that lights are on in several rooms.

- . **If the prowler has already broken in, get out.** If you cannot leave, retreat into your home - put other doors between the two of you, and call the police.

- . **Memorize a description of the intruder.** When the intruder has left, write it down as soon as you have called the police. Don't rely on memory.

- . **If you find any evidence that someone has entered your home or apartment, report it** even if nothing has been taken. Illegal entry is a crime.

- . **Never knowingly buy stolen property.** When the price is ridiculously low, when a stranger is selling it at your door, on a corner, etc., it is almost certainly stolen. Report it to the police.

On the telephone

Never give any personal information (your name, address, your age, etc.) to a stranger on the telephone.

If someone dials your number 'by mistake', do not give out your correct number. Ask what number was dialed and suggest dialing again.

Never let a stranger on the telephone know when you will or will not be home.

If your partner is not home, do not indicate this. Simply say that your partner is not available, take the caller's telephone number and say

that the call will be returned.

Instruct a babysitter never to tell ANYONE who telephones that she is alone with the children.

If the children are old enough to be left alone, instruct THEM never to tell the caller that they are alone.

If you live alone, have only your first initial and last name listed in the telephone book. If your phone is programmable, program 9-1-1 at the first or last button.

If you receive an obscene telephone call, hang up immediately and notify the police. PUT A METAL POLICE OR A FOX 40 WHISTLE near the telephone and blow into the mouthpiece should you receive another obscene call. Another option is to use an answering machine, and to consider having barking dog noises in the background or press *69 to trace the call if this feature is available.

On the street

Always be aware of the possibility that you may be accosted by day or night while out walking. DO NOT DAYDREAM!

Always carry your purse or briefcase close to your body. If you have a shoulder bag, keep an arm around it - don't dangle the straps from your hand.

If you are walking on the sidewalk and believe that you are being followed, head for a place where there are people as quickly as you can.

If possible, do not walk alone, particularly at night. If you must, try to preplan your route and know where the 24 hour open stores, gas station, etc. are.

If you are walking and are being followed by a car, turn around and walk back the other way. The car will have to turn around and will then be on the opposite side of the street.

If you are walking and someone in a car asks you for directions, remain several feet from the car as you talk. Stay far enough away to be safe from a hand that might grab your purse or you.

Do not wear revealing clothing while alone in the street. If you are dressed for a party, add a jacket or wrap to your costume if you must do

any walking en route. Wear running shoes and carry heels or party shoes in a bag.

If you MUST walk alone at night, plan your route in advance. Know the restaurants and shops that will be open; know the locations of telephone booths and police stations. If approached or threatened, head for the locations where people are, i.e. 24-hour gas stations and convenience stores.

Never walk near high shrubbery, dark buildings or parked cars. If you are surrounded by both, walk in the middle of the sidewalk. If the sidewalk seems too dark, walk in the centre of the street.

. **Never take short cuts through alleys or parks at night.** If at all possible, walk closely behind a group of people who look trustworthy.

. **When you walk through a parking lot, always have your own car keys out and ready to slip in the lock.**

. **If someone walking near you is making you uncomfortable, look up at a lighted window and wave.** Pretend that someone is watching out for you.

. **If someone is crowding you at a subway or bus stop, it may be a pickpocket at work.** Say loudly 'somebody's pushing me'.

. **If your bus stop is not adequately lighted, complain to the transit authorities.**

. **While waiting for a bus at night, stand under a street lamp or close to other people** - avoid isolation.

. **If you go to the movies alone, avoid dark corners or rear seats in the balcony.**

. **If you are bothered by someone in the theatre, express your feelings, change your seat or complain to an usher.** If there is no usher, YELL; that is the quickest means of getting help.

. **Do not fight a mugger that you know is armed** — the weapon will very likely be turned on you.

. **If the mugger is armed, do as you are told.** If you have children, be sure that they do as the mugger says as well. Remain calm - your property is the motive rather than your life.

. **If you are attacked on the street by a person who appears to**

be UNARMED, yell loudly and fight dirty. Gouge the eyes with your keys or with your thumbs; knee the groin area.

. **If you are attacked from behind**, dig your heels into the attacker's instep; kick the shins, grab the little finger and bend it back.

. **Remember that only about three percent of all burglars enter a home when they believe that people are there**; it may, therefore, never happen to you. Should you confront one, however, the very first rule is: STAY OUT OF THE WAY. NEVER get between the burglar and the exit, and NEVER try to stop the burglar from leaving.

. **When you return home, never leave your house key in the lock** for a minute after you open the door.

. **Never put your key and handbag down by the door** while carrying packages inside.

Driving

Never leave the key in the ignition of your car; never leave your car unlocked. Eighty percent of stolen cars have been left unlocked; forty-two percent had the key in the ignition.

Never hide an extra key anywhere in your car; as with house keys, thieves are familiar with all the hiding places.

Never pick up hitchhikers; never hitchhike yourself.

Consider an alarm system for your car, and when you have one, paste an alarm decal on your windshield.

Always keep your automobile well-maintained to avoid possible breakdowns. Check your gas gauge every time you start your car; check your tires at least once a week for wear.

Always check under your car as you approach it. Check the back seat before you enter. Carry a small flashlight with you for doing this at night.

Keep your car doors locked day or night; keep your car windows closed. If you need ventilation, open the window an inch or so and use the air vents.

Never place valuables on the seat beside you - keep things on the floor.

If you have any expensive accessories in your car, engrave your

driver's license number on them for identification. If you are buying a stereo system, pick one that can be removed and placed in the trunk when the vehicle is unattended.

. **If another car is following you, DO NOT drive home.** Drive to a police station or service station with your horn blaring.

. **If you are stopped at a traffic light and someone tries to enter your car,** keep honking the horn, and if you can safely do it, go through a red light - you may even attract a police officer.

When going away

Before you go away on vacation, cancel newspaper and milk deliveries, but don't detail the reasons for the cancellation.

Ask your letter carrier to hold your mail at the post office, deliver it to a neighbour or have it forwarded to you.

Leave a key with a friend. Ask your friend to check the inside of the house and periodically change the position of draperies and blinds.

Arrange with a neighbour to remove advertising announcements and the like from your lawn, mailbox or steps. Leave some small toys or garden furniture outside where they are visible from the street - ask a neighbour to change their positions from time to time.

Store all your valuables.

Inform the police when you are leaving and when you plan to return. In some jurisdictions, police will check your home while you are away.

Don't set the trash cans out early (a sure sign that you won't be home on collection day). Ask a neighbour to set them out on the proper day.

Don't disconnect the telephone. Consider engaging a telephone answering service (human or machine) to answer the phone, but provide no definite details about your absence.

Consider inviting friends, or relatives or associates to live in your home or apartment while you are away. If no one is available, try a local hospital for the names of interns, the police department for a young officer or church or youth groups which may know someone who would be glad to move in. Get to know whoever is moving in before you leave.

. **Consider swapping homes with someone in another part of the country.**

Travelling

Carry as little money as possible. Use credit cards and traveller's cheques as much as possible.

Be aware that pickpockets frequent airports and train and bus terminals, so watch out for them, particularly there.

Don't keep tapping the spot where you keep your wallet (a pocket, a pocket book, etc.); it is a sign that you are nervous about it.

Don't pack your car with luggage until the moment you are leaving your resort or motel. Never pack it and leave it standing.

Consider purchasing your own lock and key for motel doors, bureau drawers and closets. Inexpensive travel locks and door alarms are available at most hardware stores.