

THE DENVER CENTER FOR CRIME VICTIMS
EVERYDAY AWARENESS TO KEEP YOURSELF SAFE

AWARENESS is very important!

Be aware of your surroundings

Be aware of occupied vehicles

Be aware of others

Move confidently and with purpose

WHEN WALKING, BIKING, JOGGING OR DOING OTHER OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES...

- Know your route; drive it first in daylight and at night if you will be using it frequently.
- Carry your cell phone with you and have an emergency number for quick calling.
- Stay in well-lighted areas.
- Vary your route.
- Walk with others.
- Steer clear of shadows, isolated areas, stairs, vacant lots, construction sites, alleys, shrubs, and other hiding places.
- Don't walk close to doorways or vehicles.
- Consider having a friend or roommate meet you halfway (call ahead of time).
- Know where 24-hour stores/gas stations/businesses are located.
- Walk facing traffic and be especially aware if wearing headphones and listening to music.
- Keep change or public transportation fares with you in case you change your mind.
- Have house and car keys in hand before stopping at your car door.
- If walking a distance, wear comfortable shoes.

IF FOLLOWED WHILE WALKING...

By someone in a car:

- Turn around and walk in the opposite direction; call someone for assistance.
- Try to get a license plate number and a description of the vehicle and driver.

By someone on foot:

- Cross the street and go in the opposite direction.
- Walk to a place likely to have people; call someone for assistance.
- If you choose to run, run as fast as possible.
- **YELL FOR HELP.**
- Call the police.

WHEN DRIVING YOUR CAR...

- Keep your car in good running condition and with plenty of gas.
- Plan your route; have enough gas and money and cell phone easily located.
- Keep windows up and door locked.
- Keep valuables out of sight.
- Do not stop for hitchhikers.

EVERYDAY AWARENESS TO KEEP YOURSELF SAFE (cont.)

WHEN PARKING YOUR CAR...

- Choose well-lighted areas.
- Look around you before getting out.
- Keep your car locked.
- Be extra cautious in underground and enclosed parking lots; note where exits
 - and emergency phones are located

WHEN RETURNING TO YOUR CAR...

- Have your key ready, in hand, and phone accessible.
- Be aware of who and what is around you.
- If carrying packages, keep one hand free and your vision clear.
- Look inside the car and back seat before unlocking the car or getting inside.
- Note if car ceiling light came on. (Has someone broken it to hide inside?)

WHEN YOU HAVE CAR TROUBLE...

- Steer to safe, well-lighted areas.
- Call for someone to assist you if you have your cell phone with you.
- Wait inside with your emergency flashers on or use flares if you have them.
- Tie a handkerchief or cloth to the antenna or use an emergency sunscreen.
- Raise your hood.
- Keep the doors locked and the windows rolled up.

If someone stops to offer help:

- Don't get out.
- Ask them to call for assistance.

IF FOLLOWED WHILE DRIVING...

- Drive to an attended area and honk your horn (fire dept., 7-11, etc.).
- Call the police.
- Try to get license plate number and physical description of car and driver.
- Drive to your home, or to someone else's home; do not stop.
- Honk you horn, flash your headlights, use your emergency flashers, etc.

WHEN USING PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION...

- Wait at a bus stop with other people (avoid isolated stops).
- Know where you are going and how to get back (especially if you're touring).
- Choose a seat nearest the driver.
- If harassed, talk loudly or get the attention of other passengers and driver.
- Be alert to who gets off with you, and if followed, remember to get to a place where there are other people, cross the street, call someone for assistance.

EVERYDAY AWARENESS TO KEEP YOURSELF SAFE (cont.)

WHEN THERE IS A STRANGER AT THE DOOR...

- Use a peephole.
- Demand ID; you can verify it by making a call.
- If someone needs help, don't let them in; make a call for them instead.
- If a package delivery, get slip under the door to sign; delivery people can leave it outside.
- Don't indicate that you're alone.

If they try to break in:

- Leave the house immediately and call 911.
- Yell at the person that you're dialing 911.
- If you can't get out, lock yourself in a room or hide, where you have a phone.

WHEN RETURNING TO YOUR HOME...

- Have your key ready.
- Do not enter if something seems unusual or there are signs of forced entry.
- Have your porch light on or other light(s) on inside your home.
- If dropped off, have driver keep headlights on and have them wait till you are safely inside or have them walk you to the door.

IF YOU LIVE ALONE...

- Don't label door or mailboxes with your name (if you need to label your box, as in an apartment building, use a plural, such as "The Gibsons")
- On return mailing addresses, use a plural or just your first initial with the last name
- On recorded phone messages, keep it simple ("This is 025-0090. Please leave a message.") and do not give your name; use "we instead of I" if necessary.
- Have an unlisted phone number, or if listing, use only your first initials(s).

HOUSE KEYS...

- Do not label.
- Keep them separated.
- Change the locks and keys if they are lost or stolen.
- Don't leave house keys with car mechanics, parking attendants, car washers, etc.

APARTMENT DWELLERS...

- Avoid: Elevators with strangers, laundry rooms alone at night, swimming pools with strangers, storage and parking areas, etc.
- Do not allow people you don't know through security doors.

HOME SECURITY...

- Use a variety of security measures: lights, locks, dogs, alarms, Neighborhood Watch, know your neighbors, etc.

**LIGHT AND NOISE ARE
MAJOR CRIME DETERRENTS**

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