



POLICE DEPARTMENT COUNTY OF SUFFOLK
ACCREDITED LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY

Safety Tips

Personal Safety Tips for the Street

- Don't walk alone during late-night hours. Walk in groups whenever you can – there is safety in numbers.
- Let a family member or friend know your destination and your estimated time of arrival or return. If there is a problem, police can be notified as quickly as possible.
- Carry a cell phone and program 911 into it.
- Stay in well-lighted areas as much as possible. Avoid shortcuts, alleys, vacant lots, wooded and/or secluded areas.
- Wear clothes and shoes that give you freedom of movement.
- Don't talk to strangers.
- If you are wearing headphones, keep the volume low so that you can hear outside noises.
- Never hitchhike or accept rides from strangers.
- If someone or something makes you uneasy, avoid the person or leave.
- Don't display expensive jewelry in public.
- Know the neighborhoods where you live and work.
- Identify the locations of police and fire stations, public telephones, hospitals and restaurants or stores that are open late.
- Work with neighbors and local government to organize community clean-ups. The cleaner your neighborhood, the less attractive it is to crime.

Personal Safety Tips for Home

- Don't allow strangers into your home, even if they are hurt or say they need help. Keep the door locked and let the person(s) know you will call the police for assistance.
- Don't advertise that you live alone.
- Never leave a message on your answering machine that indicates you may be away from home. Rather than saying, "I'm not home right now", your voice mail message can indicate, "I'm not available right now".
- Don't be afraid to call the police to investigate suspicious circumstances, unusual people or strange noises. It's always better to be safe than sorry.
- When you move into a new home or apartment, change the locks if you own it or ask the manager to change them if you rent.
- Don't leave notes on your door announcing when you will be home.
- Always lock your doors – upon entering and exiting your home.
- Keep outdoor lights on at night.
- If you arrive home and you observe an open door, a broken window, a slit screen or things appear to be out of place, don't go in. Leave and call 911.
- If you are accosted by a robber, follow his/her instructions; don't argue or attempt to fight with your assailant.
- When leaving your home for extended periods of time, ask your neighbors to keep an eye on your home and property and alert the police if they see any suspicious activity.
- Suspend newspaper and mail delivery when away for any lengthy period of time.
- If there is suspicious, on-going activity in your neighborhood, consider organizing/joining a **neighborhood watch** group in your community.
- Consider an alarm system for your home.



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- If you think you hear someone breaking in, leave safely if you can and call police. If you can't leave, lock yourself in a room with a phone and call the police. If an intruder is in your room, pretend you are asleep.
- Guns are responsible for many accidental deaths in the home every year. Think carefully before buying a gun. If you do own one, learn how to store it and use it safely. Keep guns out of children's reach.

Personal Safety Tips for Vehicle

- Never leave your car running or the keys in the ignition when you're away from it, even for "just a minute".
- Always roll up the windows and lock the car, even if it's in your driveway or in front of your home.
- Never leave valuables in plain view, even if your car is locked. Put them in the trunk or at least out of sight. Buy/install radios, tape and CD players that can be removed and locked in the trunk.
- Carry the registration and insurance card with you. Don't leave personal identification documents or credit cards in your vehicle.
- When you pay to park in a lot or garage, leave just the ignition key with the attendant. Make sure no personal information is attached. Do the same when you take your car for repairs.
- Install a mechanical locking device, commonly called clubs, collars or j-bars designed to lock to the steering wheel, column or brake to prevent the wheel from being turned more than a few degrees.
- Investigate security systems if you live in a high-theft area or drive an automobile that's an attractive target for the thieves. Check with your insurance company to determine if you qualify for a discount on your car insurance by installing an anti-theft system.
- Always park your car in well-lighted areas with good visibility, close to walkways, stores and people.
- Always be alert to people just sitting in their cars.
- Approach your car with the key in hand. Look around and inside before getting in.
- If you are alone at a shopping mall, ask a security guard to escort you to your car.
- After checking around your car, enter it quickly and lock all the doors and keep the windows rolled up. Teach your children to enter and exit the car quickly.
- If your car is bumped in traffic, don't get out of the car. Use your cell phone to call 911. Many times carjackers use this technique so that they can overpower you and steal your car.
- Be especially alert at intersections, gas stations, ATMs, shopping malls, convenience and grocery stores.
- Do not argue or fight with a carjacker; you could be seriously injured or killed. Your life is worth more than a car.
- Never agree to be kidnapped. Either drop the keys or throw them away from the car as far as you can. When the carjacker goes for the keys, run in the opposite direction as fast as you can.
- If your car is stolen, report it to the police immediately. Also report abandoned cars to the local agency that handles removal.
- When buying a used car from an individual or a dealer, make sure you have the proper titles, make sure the VIN number is intact and the "federal sticker" is on the inside of the driver's door. The sticker should match the VIN.



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- Suggest that any dealer, rental car agency or auto repair shop you use offer auto theft prevention information in the waiting rooms.
- To deter a carjacking, etch the vehicle identification number (VIN) on the windows, doors, fenders and trunk lid. This helps discourage professional thieves who have to remove or replace etched parts before selling the car.
- Copy the VIN and tag number on a card, and keep it in a safe place. If your vehicle is stolen, give this information to the police.

Personal Safety Tips for Automated Teller Machine (ATM)

- Try to use machines you are familiar with and try to use terminals located inside banks rather than independent terminals.
- Be aware of your surroundings. Look around before conducting a transaction. If you see anyone or anything suspicious, cancel your transaction and go to another ATM.
- If you must use an ATM after hours, make sure it's well-lighted.
- Never walk away from an ATM with cash still in hand. If you are going to count your money, do so at a secure spot.

Neighborhood Safety Tips for Parents

- Know where your children are. Have them tell you or ask permission before leaving the house, and give them a time to check in or be home. When possible, have them leave a phone number of their location.
- Help children learn important phone numbers. Have them practice reciting their home phone number and address and your work and cell phone numbers. If they have trouble memorizing these, write them down on a card and have them carry it at all times. Tell your children where you will be and the best way to reach you.
- Set limits on where your children can go in your neighborhood. Do you want them crossing busy roads or playing in alleys or abandoned buildings? Are there certain homes in your neighborhood where you do not want your children to go into?
- Get to know your children's friends. Meet their parents before letting your children go to their homes, and keep a list of their phone numbers.
- Choose a safe house in your neighborhood where your children can go if they need help. Point out other places they can go for help, like stores, libraries and police stations.
- Teach children to settle arguments with words, not fists. Use role play to talk out problems, walking away from fist fights and what to do when confronted with bullies. Remind your children that taunting and teasing can hurt friends and make enemies.
- Work together with your neighbors. Watch out for suspicious unusual behavior in your neighborhood. Get to know your neighbors and their children so you can look out for one another.

Online Safety Tips for Kids:

- Tell your parents or guardian if you see something that makes you uncomfortable.
- Let your parents know who you talk to online.
- Never give out your full name or address.
- Talk with your parents about the dangers of meeting new friends online.
- Ask your parents for their permission before you buy anything online or sign up for anything.
- If you download music or movie files onto your computer, don't steal. Check out the rules of pay-per-download services.



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- Don't use your computer or cell phone to bully anyone.
- If someone sends you an email or text message that is saying mean things about you or someone else, don't respond. Show the message to your parent or guardian.
- Don't forward a mean or vulgar email or text message.
- Don't send an email or message from your camera phone that contains a picture of someone else, especially a picture they might not like, without that person's permission.
- Talk with your parents about any question you might have about what's right or wrong about your internet or cell phone use. Your cyber safety is a family affair!

Safety Kid Tips for Wireless Users:

- Know who is texting or calling you.
- Know what not to send. The impact of words or pictures can be harmful.
- Know whether you should respond. If you receive a word or text message that makes you feel uncomfortable, tell a parent or a trusted adult.
- Your cell phone should be used for getting in touch with your friends and family, to summon help in an emergency and to get information you need anytime.
- Take control of your own safety by programming your friends and family into your phone and know who to contact in case of an emergency.
- Don't answer calls from people you don't know.
- Don't reply to inappropriate text messages
- Be courteous when talking and texting because aggressive behavior online and on phone can have serious consequences.
- Don't show off your electronic property. Keep devices hidden from view when not in use.
- Keep a record of all valuables you take to school. This includes each item's color, make, model, serial number and any other identifying information.
- Report any theft of property immediately to your school resource officer, security staff or the police.

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