

Personal Safety

General tips

- Avoid walking home alone at the end of an evening - take a taxi or walk in a group with friends.
- Keep a telephone number of a trusted taxi firm handy
- Avoid taking short cuts or walking through dark deserted areas
- Keep near the kerb away from bushes and buildings
- Always walk facing oncoming traffic
- It is not recommended to hitch-hike or pick up hitch-hikers
- Have your keys ready when you approach your home or vehicle to avoid delay in entering
- If you are attacked, scream and shout as loud as you can and use a personal attack alarm if you have one
- Carry a torch after dark and be alert at all times

At the shops

- Carry your bag close to your body and be wary of persons around you
- If someone snatches your bag don't struggle - you may be injured
- If you are attacked or robbed, get as good a description as possible of the offender and tell the Police immediately
- Don't leave purses, wallets or handbags unattended on top of shopping bags or prams or on your supermarket trolley
- Don't carry excessive amounts of cash in your purse, bag or wallet
- Don't put your purse or wallet in a back pocket
- Don't carry your credit cards and cheque book in the same bag or pocket
- When withdrawing money from a cash point machine, be wary of anybody standing by or attempting to distract you. Put the money straight into a purse, bag or wallet.

In the car

- Try to travel on busy routes, where possible
- Always lock your car after entering or leaving it
- Check the interior of your car before entering it - especially the back seat - and carry a torch after dark
- Keep valuables secure and out of sight
- If you are followed, don't get out of the car, make sure that doors and windows are locked, sound the horn or flash your lights to attract attention and use your mobile phone (if you have one) to call for help

On Public Transport

- Avoid isolated bus stops
- Sit near the driver/conductor or another passenger
- If pestered, complain to the driver, conductor or guard
- In trains avoid empty compartments or ones containing only one person.

At Home

- Secure all windows and doors, preferably using bolts/window locks
- Fit a door chain and viewer and use them
- Never allow strangers into your home. If somebody does call, check their identity card. If in doubt call the Police.
- If you live alone, use only your initials and surname on name plates and in phone directories
- When answering the phone, don't let on that you are alone. And never give out your phone number when answering the phone
- Close the curtains at dusk
- Report all suspicious incidents to the Police immediately
- Consider joining a Neighbourhood Watch or Home Watch scheme. Contact your local police station for details.

Bogus callers

- When answering the door, make sure you STOP, CHAIN and CHECK.
- If you have elderly relatives remind them of the stop, chain, check message when you see them
- Before you answer your front door make sure the back door is locked
- If you are at all unsure about a caller never let them in no matter what they say
- It isn't rude to make someone stand on the doorstep while you check they are who they say they are. If a caller claims to be from an organisation, call them to double check.
- If you have elderly neighbours keep an eye on who's going to their door. If their garden is untidy - one of the clues bogus callers look for - offer to help tidy it up.
- Fit secure window and door locks.