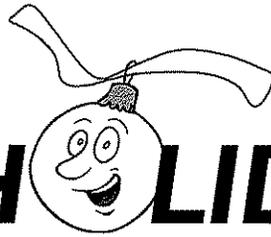


This holiday season, don't let the spirit of giving lull you into giving burglars, muggers, nor pickpockets a chance to do their dirty work. Criminals love the holidays as much as everyone else, chiefly because it's a perfect opportunity to commit a crime. Keep these tips in mind for a safe and happy holiday season.



HOLIDAY SAFETY

TIPS FOR A SAFE AND HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON

If You're Traveling ...

- ▶ Set an automatic timer for your lights.
- ▶ Ask your neighbor to watch your home, shovel the walks, pick up newspapers, collect mail, and park in the driveway from time to time.
- ▶ Be sure to hide any gifts that may be left in the house while you're gone.

If You're Out for the Evening ...

- ▶ Turn on lights and a radio or the TV so that it appears that someone is home.
- ▶ Lock all doors and windows while you're out, even if you'll be gone for just a few minutes.
- ▶ Do not place packages or gifts near windows or in other high-visibility sites.

If You're Shopping ...

- ▶ Don't let your guard down just because you are rushing.
- ▶ Stay alert and be aware of everything around you at all times.
- ▶ Park in well-lighted spaces and as close to the store as possible, lock your car doors, and hide packages in the trunk or under the seats.
- ▶ Do not carry large amounts of cash; pay with a check or credit card if possible.
- ▶ Make sure that you do not carry all your packages at the same time.
- ▶ Carry your purse close to your body, not dangling by the straps. Put a wallet in an inside coat or front pants pocket.
- ▶ If you take your children shopping, teach them to go to a police officer or a store security guard if they get separated or get lost.

If a Stranger Comes to the Door ...

- ▶ Stay alert to suspicious-looking couriers delivering packages to you or your neighbors.
- ▶ Many con artists take advantage of holiday generosity by going door-to-door. Ask for identification and get specifics to how and where the donations will be spent/used.
- ▶ If you feel uncomfortable, just say "no thank you" and shut the door.

If You're at Home ...

- ▶ Turn on outside lights to deter burglars.
- ▶ Report any suspicious behavior to the police or local community watch groups.
- ▶ Make sure your homeowners (or renters) insurance is up-to-date and everything is inventoried properly.



National Crime Prevention Council

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