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# PREVENTING VIOLENCE

In this transformative guide, you'll discover how to break free from the patterns that put you at risk and take control of your safety with confidence. From understanding the subtle characteristics that make women more vulnerable, to learning hundreds of practical, life-saving tips, this ebook equips you with the knowledge and strategies to protect yourself in any situation. Whether at home or in public, you'll find actionable steps for every scenario. Empowerment is the key, and this book provides the tools to transform fear into strength, and vulnerability into resilience.

WRITTEN BY GINGER RAE  
CREATOR OF YGG FITNESS & DEFENSE  
FOR WOMEN



*Exclusive*

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# INTRODUCTION TO PREVENTING VIOLENCE

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*EFFECTIVE SELF-DEFENSE BEGINS  
WITH PREVENTION STRATEGIES.*

- **Victimology** - Understanding what increases your chance of being a victim of crime or violence.
- **Safety measures** - Daily activities and precautions you use to reduce the risk of crime and violence.
- **Awareness** - If you are aware of your surroundings, you are more likely to see an attack coming and take preventative measures.

If you understand their purpose, it's easier to incorporate prevention strategies into your daily life.

- **Detection** - In the "[Understanding Violence](#)" eBook you learned that criminals want to avoid being recognized or caught. With a heightened sense of awareness, you are more likely to spot a potential attacker. Once detected, surround yourself with witnesses, and bring attention to a suspicious person.
- **Intrusion** - Secure your home and your car with locks and alarms. Take every precaution to restrict a criminal's access to your personal environment. If a perpetrator can't get to you, he can't attack you.
- **Isolation** - Perpetrators seek individuals who are alone to avoid being recognized or caught. They also seek isolated locations to avoid being interrupted. Being alone and in an isolated location makes you an easy target. Always avoid both scenarios.

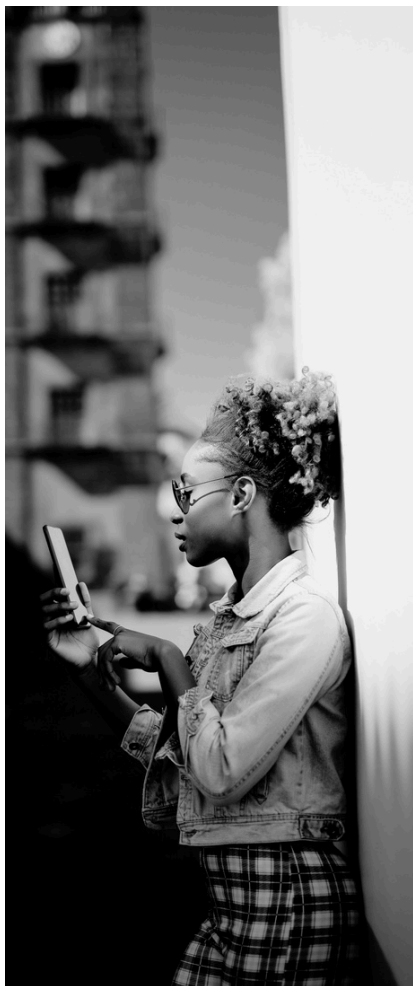
We all lead very different lifestyles. Incorporate prevention strategies applicable to your safety concerns and needs. Base your safety plan on your own individual circumstances, environments, risk potential, and habits.

*G. Rae*



# 2

## VICTIMOLOGY



**THERE ARE DEGREES OF RISK FOR ANY TYPE OF CRIME, BASED ON YOUR CAREER, LIFESTYLE, RELATIONSHIPS, ACTIVITIES, AND EVEN PERSONALITY, ASPECTS OF WHICH ARE OBVIOUS IN YOUR BEHAVIOR AND DEemeanor. IN THE FIELD OF VICTIMOLOGY, THIS IS KNOWN AS RISK CONTINUUM.**

Obvious factors that make you a potential victim:

- ▶ **Flashing wads of cash**
- ▶ **Wearing expensive jewelry**
- ▶ **Walking alone on back streets**
- ▶ **Preoccupied. Lacking environmental awareness**
- ▶ **Passive, submissive appearance**
- ▶ **Chemically impaired**


Armed robbers often attack the slowest in the crowd.

Sexual offenders look for people they can easily overpower. Someone not paying attention, who seemingly would not put up a fight, or who is in a remote location, ensuring the assault more convenient.

Distraction is another cue offenders look for. Talking on a cellphone, listening to an iPod, reading directions or a map, all of which hinder your environmental awareness and make you more vulnerable.

Studies show that it is women with passive, submissive personalities who are most likely to be raped. The characteristics of submissive body language, such as downward gaze and slumped posture, may even be misinterpreted by rapists as flirtation.





**Myth** - Dressing provocatively makes you an easy target. (In truth, offenders view these women as confident and more likely to fight back.)

**Fact** - Women who wear modest clothing are far more likely to be a victim. (Offenders consider these women to be submissive and easy to overpower.)

**Drinking and drug use**, not surprisingly, immediately mark a person as an easy target. That goes double for sexual assault.

**Any hairstyle that can be easily grabbed.**

Women with long hair, a ponytail, bun, or braid are at a greater risk of being assaulted than women with short hair.

Because criminals are very opportunistic, they prey on predictable people. **Predictability** makes you an attractive and easy target.

# Change your routine



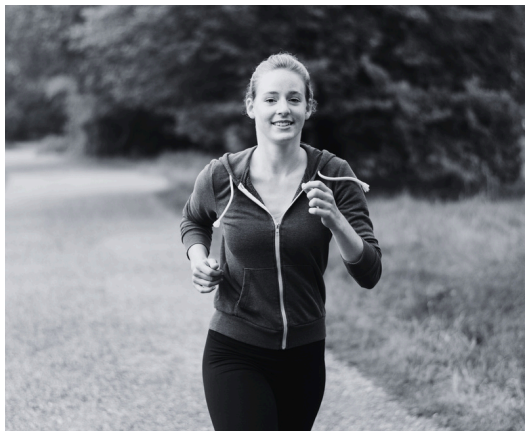
Do you leave your home at the same time every morning?

On your way to work do you stop at the same convenience store or gas station?

Do you take the same route on the way home?

Frequently changing your daily routine greatly reduces your chances of becoming a victim.

- Vary the times you leave the house each morning
- Frequently change your route to and from work
- Avoid stopping at the same stores
- Try not to park in the same location everyday
- Frequently change your walking, running or cycling path.



# IF YOU ARE A VICTIM

National Center for Victims of Crime

[victimsofcrime.org](http://victimsofcrime.org)

Phone: 855-4-VICTIM (855-484-2846)

Chat: [VictimConnect.org](http://VictimConnect.org)

Web-based information and service referrals:

[VictimConnect.org](http://VictimConnect.org)

VictimLaw: [www.victimlaw.info](http://www.victimlaw.info)



## RESOURCES

To find out about victims' rights in your area, you can call the **National Crime Victim Help line. 1-800-FYI-CALL**

The Help line's victim advocates can explain victims' rights and refer you to agencies in your area that understand your jurisdiction's laws and can assist you with getting the help and information you need. Help line services are free and confidential.

Another useful information source is **VictimLaw**, a comprehensive online database on state laws affecting victims.

Visit [www.victimlaw.info](http://www.victimlaw.info) to find information on your jurisdiction's laws.

*"Nowhere does victimology imply that people who stand out as easy targets are to blame for becoming victims. Predators and offenders bear sole responsibility for the crimes they commit—and should be held accountable and punished accordingly. Moreover, many attacks are random, and no amount of vigilance could deter them. Whether victims are selected randomly or targeted because of specific characteristics, they bear no responsibility for crimes against them."*

(Marked for Mayheim, Hustmyre & Dixit)

# 3

## SAFETY TIPS HOME

- Install a monitored home security system to prevent burglary and unwanted intrusions.
- Use a buddy system with a friend or neighbor and check on each other once a day.
- Put only your last name and your initials on your mailbox.
- Always verify who is at your door before answering. If you don't have a peephole, consider getting one. You do not have to open your door just because someone is there.
- NEVER let unscheduled repair people in your home before calling the company to verify they are legitimate.
- Always keep doors and windows locked when home or away; locks are available to allow windows to be opened only a short distance.
- Doors with outside hinges should be replaced with non-removable hinge pins.
- Sliding door panels should be prevented from being lifted out of their tracks. The top track should have small screws protruding down so that the door barely clears them. Be sure to wedge the sliding door with a metal or wooden rod placed in the bottom track with a string for easy removal.
- If you expect to come home after dark, turn on the porch light, have your keys ready, enter quickly and lock the door.
- Keep shades and curtains closed at night.
- Lights in more than one room indicate that someone is home and discourages burglars.
- Keep an outside light on even when you are home at night to discourage prowlers.
- Trim trees, bushes and shrubs so that a person cannot be concealed in them.





**MOTION SENSOR LIGHTS ARE AN INEXPENSIVE WAY TO ALERT YOU AND SCARE PROWLERS.**

- Don't leave ladders, stackable boxes or garden tools around the yard; they could help a burglar get into your home.
- Firmly wedge a steel bar across basement windows, or install a metal grate.
- Don't let your valuables where they can be seen from the windows. Consider using a safe or safety deposit box.
- Do not leave extra keys under doormats, potted plants or any other obvious outdoor location. Thieves will generally find them. Find an inconspicuous place to hide the keys, or give a set to a neighbor you can trust.
- Keep your house keys separate from your car keys.



**CONSIDER POSTING A "BEWARE OF DOG" SIGN OR BREED-SPECIFIC SIGN SUCH AS "I LOVE MY GERMAN SHEPHERD" EVEN IF YOU DON'T OWN A DOG.**

- Keep garage doors shut and keep doors leading from the garage into your home locked. Criminals have been known to steal garage door remote control openers from vehicles, duplicate with a universal remote, and return to gain entry into the home.
- Don't leave notes on the door for repair people or family members. These alert the burglar that you are temporarily not home.



**PUT YOUR CAR KEYS BESIDE YOUR BED AT NIGHT. IF YOU HEAR A NOISE OR SUSPECT AN INTRUDER, HIT THE ALARM BUTTON FOR YOUR VEHICLE. THE ALARM WILL CONTINUE TO HONK YOUR HORN UNTIL EITHER YOUR BATTERY RUNS DOWN OR YOU TURN IT OFF YOURSELF, AND HERE COME YOUR NEIGHBORS TO THE RESCUE! USE THIS IN A PARKING LOT TOO!**

# Home



**If you are going to be away from home:**

**ARRANGE TO HAVE YOUR MAIL AND NEWSPAPERS COLLECTED. NEVER CANCEL DELIVERY; YOU DON'T KNOW WHO WILL GET THAT INFORMATION**

- Arrange for deliveries to be suspended and to have your lawn mowed while you are away.
- Lock your pet door.
- Use electronic timers to turn lights on and off at different times and in different rooms.
- Leave a TV or stereo on in the room where a burglar would most likely break in.

**Be suspicious of anyone unfamiliar in your neighborhood:**

- Going door to door knocking.
- Walking down or hanging around alleys.
- Taking particular interest in houses, open garages, vehicles and/or yards.
- Roaming or returning to your neighborhood without visiting any particular address.
- Asking questions about your neighbors' work schedules or when a neighbor on vacation might return.
- Sitting in a parked vehicle watching the neighborhood.

**Be suspicious of:**

- Vehicles parked at the end of streets.
- Unfamiliar vehicles cruising your neighborhood.

# 4

## CHECKLIST APARTMENT

### Check out your apartment:

Does your -

- Entry door have a dead bolt lock and peephole?
- Sliding glass door have a wooden rod in the track so it can't be opened and pins in the overhead frame so it can't be lifted out?
- Landlord or building manager tightly control all keys?

### Check out your building:

- Is there some kind of control over who enters and leaves the building?
- Are walkways, entrances, parking areas, elevators, hallways, stairways, laundry rooms, and storage areas well-lighted 24 hours a day?
- Are fire stairs locked from the stairwell side above the ground floor, so you can exit but no one can enter?
- Are mail boxes in a well-traveled, well lit areas and do they have good locks?
- Are things well-maintained - are burnt-out lights fixed properly, shrubs trimmed, trash and snow removed?

### Check out your neighbors:

- Get to know your neighbors. Join or organize an Apartment Watch group so neighbors can look out for and help each other. *(National Crime Prevention)*
- If you live in a large building or complex, think about a tenant patrol that watches for crime around the building, provides escort services for the elderly and handicapped, and monitors comings and goings in the lobby.
- Work with landlord to sponsor social events for tenants - a Sunday breakfast, a picnic, a Halloween party.
- Look beyond problems to root causes - does your building need a better playground, a social evening for teens, a tenant association, new landscaping, a basketball hoop? Work with the landlord for changes that make everyone proud of where they live. *(National Crime Prevention Council)*





# 5

## SAFETY TIPS NEIGHBORHOOD

- **Know where your children are.** Have your children 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 where they will be.
- **Help children learn important phone numbers.** Have your children 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 always. 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? Playing in alleys or abandoned buildings? Are there certain homes in your neighborhood that you don't want your children to go to?
- **Get to know your children's friends.** Meet their parents before letting your children to go to their home and keep a list of their phone numbers. If you can't meet their parents, call and talk to them. Ask what your children might do at their house and if they will be supervised.
- **Choose a safe house in your neighborhood.** Pick a neighbor's house 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.** Role-play talking out problems, walking away from fist fights, and what to do when confronted with bullies. Remind them that taunting and teasing can hurt friends and make enemies.
- **Work together with your neighbors.** Watch out for suspicious and unusual behavior in your neighborhood. Get to know your neighbors and their children so you can look out for one another.



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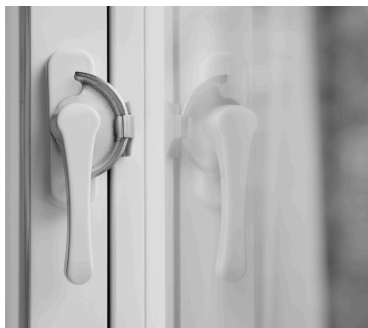
# 6

## SAFETY TIPS WORK

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- Keep your purse, wallet, keys, or other valuable items with you at all times or locked in a drawer or closet.
- Check the identity of any strangers who are in your office—ask whom they are visiting and if you can help them find that person.
- Don't forget to request identification from service or utility workers as well. If this makes you uncomfortable, inform security or management about your suspicions.
- Do not allow visitors to be alone in your office space. Be sure to provide an escort at all times.
- Be discreet. Don't advertise your social life or vacation plans and those of your coworkers to people visiting or calling your place of work.
- Check the Locks and Doors. Good locks are the first line of defense.
- Volunteer to lead a team of employees to work with management to ensure the physical security of your workplace.
- Check for high security locks, or electronic access control units on all doors—closets that have private information or hazardous materials -outside doors or basements, are few to consider.
- Verify that any electronic access control unit in use has secure key bypass utilizing patented control of duplication of keys. Any access control unit is only as good as its mechanical override devices.
- Make sure all doors are solid. Look for sheet steel on both sides of back and basement doors.
- Make sure door frames and hinges are strong enough that they cannot be pried open.
- Lock steel bars or door barriers with high security padlocks that have a hardened steel body and shackle to resist drills, hammers, blow-torches, and bolt cutters.



**BE CERTAIN ALL WINDOWS ARE SECURE. IF DOORS ONLY HAVE A LOCKING KNOB OR LEVER, INSTALL OR HAVE INSTALLED, A DEAD BOLT FOR ADDITIONAL SECURITY.**

- Have management change locks before you move into a new office unless they can account for all keys and provide assurance that keys have not been made without their knowledge.
- Don't assume someone else has reported a door, window, or lock that is broken or not working properly. Report these problems immediately.

### **Check the Lights**

- Your workplace should be protected with proper lighting.
- Install motion sensitive as well as constant outside lights.

**ILLUMINATE DARK PLACES AROUND THE BUILDING BY TRIMMING SHRUBS, LIGHTING WALKWAYS AND INSTALLING PARKING GARAGE LIGHTS.**



### **Check the Common Trouble Spots**

- **Reception area**—Is the receptionist equipped with a panic button for emergencies, a camera with a monitor at another employee's desk, and a high security lock on the front door that can be controlled?

**STAIRWELLS AND OUT-OF-THE-WAY CORRIDORS—DON'T USE THE STAIRS ALONE. TALK TO THE BUILDING MANAGER ABOUT IMPROVING POORLY LIGHTED CORRIDORS AND STAIRWAYS.**



- **Elevators**—Don't get into elevators with people who look out of place or behave in a strange or threatening manner. If you find yourself in an elevator with someone who makes you nervous, get off as soon as possible.
- **Restrooms**—Make sure restrooms are locked with high security locks and only employees have keys. Be extra cautious when using restrooms that are isolated or poorly lighted.

# Work



**PARKING LOTS OR GARAGES—CHOOSE A WELL LIT, WELL-GUARDED PARKING GARAGE. IF YOUR BUILDING HAS ITS OWN GARAGE, WORK WITH YOUR FACILITY MANAGER IF YOU DO NOT FEEL SAFE.**

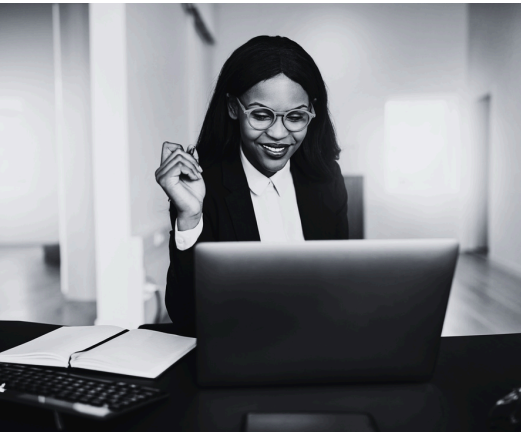
- Always lock your car and roll the windows up all the way. If you notice any strangers hanging around the parking lot, notify security or the police. When you approach the car, have the key ready. Check the floor and front and back seats before getting in.
- Lock your car as soon as you get in—before you buckle your seat belt. Write down the license number of any vehicle involved in possible crime.

**ILLUMINATE DARK PLACES AROUND THE BUILDING BY TRIMMING SHRUBS, LIGHTING WALKWAYS AND INSTALLING PARKING GARAGE LIGHTS.**

**Mailrooms—**Is the mailroom accessible only to authorized personnel? Do all employees know what the signs of suspicious mail include? (Refer to the USPS document Best Practices for Mail Center Security for additional information.)

**After hours—**Don't work late alone. Let someone know where you are and how long you intend on staying. Create a buddy system for walking to parking lots or public transportation or ask security to escort you. Never open the door to a stranger after hours.

# Risk Management



## **Keeping Violence Out of the Workplace**

Violence in the workplace takes many forms, from raised voices and profanity or sexual harassment to threats, coercion, or intimidation to robbery or homicide. Many of us think that workplace violence consists solely of a disgruntled employee committing homicide. More commonly, it is a robbery gone awry. With proper planning, an employer can prepare the workplace for incidents of violence.

## **To assess a workplace's vulnerability:**

### **Is Your Office Secure?**

- Do you have easy-to-use phone systems with emergency buttons, sign-in policies for visitors, panic buttons, safe rooms, security guards, office access controls, good lighting, safety training?

### **Does your employer take care in hiring and firing?**

- Before hiring, are employment gaps, history, references, and criminal and educational records thoroughly examined?
- Are termination procedures defined clearly with attention to notice, severance pay, and placement services?





**Could you recognize potentially violent employees?**

**Signs of stress that could erupt into violence include:**

- depression
- frequent absences
- talking in a louder-than-normal voice
- being startled easily
- increased irritability
- impatience
- concentration and memory problems

**Are you encouraged to report unusual or worrisome behavior?**

**Is there a clear, written policy that explains procedures in cases of violence and sanctions for violators?**

**Do you know to whom you should report unusual behaviors?**

**Do you work in a supportive, harmonious environment?  
Is there a culture of mutual respect?**

**Does your employer provide an employee assistance program?**

**Once you have assessed your workplaces vulnerability to violence you should take steps to implement a workplace violence prevention program, if one is not already in place. This comprehensive program is supported by all levels of employees and addresses physical security, hiring and firing practices, and employee vulnerabilities. Work with upper management to encourage them to evaluate your workplace and help start a workplace violence prevention**

# 7

## SAFETY TIPS TRAVEL

### In general:

- Do not allow your name, credit card number, home address or phone to be printed or discussed on any visible document, including luggage tags.
- Minimize the number of credit cards you carry. Good rule: one for business and one for travel.

### Before you travel:

- Copy all credit cards, airline tickets, passports and important documents. Take one copy with you, leave one at home.
- Select a hotel with modern electronic guest room locks.
- If you are traveling internationally, alert your bank that you will be out of the country and expect uncommon charges.
- Give a complete trip itinerary to a trusted friend or family member. Include your destination and returning flight numbers, the name of your hotel and phone number. Call when you arrive and when you return home from your trip. If it is an extended trip, check in periodically.

### At the airport:

- Stay alert and watch your bags and computer carefully at all times. Don't let anyone but uniformed airline personnel handle or watch your bags.
- Always carry proper identification such as a state issued driver's license or passport.
- Keep your airline ticket and identification close to you at all times.
- Do not bring anything on board for another person unknown to you or not traveling with you, however innocent or small the package or item may appear.
- Report any unattended items or suspicious activity in the airport or aircraft to the nearest airport or airline official.



# Travel




**CARRY YOUR PURSE CLOSE TO YOUR BODY OR YOUR WALLET IN AN INSIDE FRONT POCKET. BETTER YET, USE A MONEY POUCH UNDER YOUR CLOTHES. IF YOU PLACE YOUR PURSE OR CARRYON BAG ON THE FLOOR, PLACE YOUR FOOT THROUGH THE STRAP.**

- Do not bring anything on board for another person unknown to you or not traveling with you, however innocent or small the package or item may appear.
- Report any unattended items or suspicious activity in the airport or aircraft to the nearest airport or airline official.
- Don't draw attention to yourself by displaying large amounts of cash or expensive jewelry.
- Watch out for staged mishaps, like someone bumping into you or spilling a drink. Often it's a ploy to divert your attention from your valuables.
- Keep a separate record of the contents of checked luggage in case your luggage is lost or tampered with. Keep anything of value in a carryon that stays with you.

## **At the hotel:**

- Never leave luggage unattended in public areas.
- When registering, sign only your last name and first initial.
- If you are signing a hotel charge to your room; do not leave the signed receipt on the table. Give it directly back to the server.
- Check to make sure not one else is in your room every time you enter.
- Check to make sure the phone in your room is in working order.
- Keep all hotel doors and window locked. Check to see that any sliding glass doors or windows and any connecting room doors are locked.
- Insist that hotel personnel write down your room number at check-in rather than stating out loud the number of your room.





Learn the locations of fire exits, elevators, and public phones, in case of an emergency.

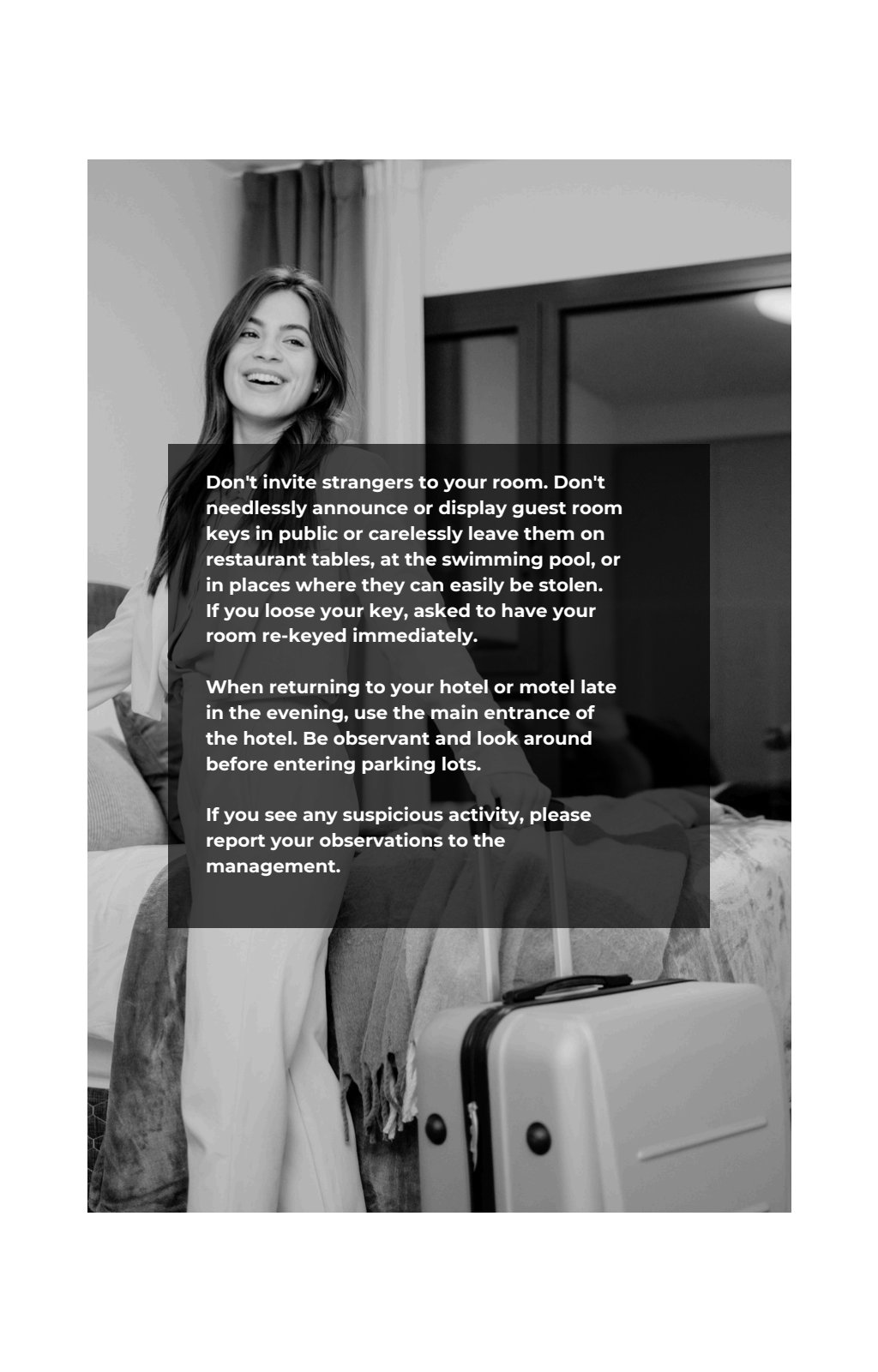
Make sure your room has an indoor viewer (peephole) and dead bolt lock.s that are isolated or poorly lighted.

Never prop your hotel room door open.

If keeping valuables—laptops, cellular phones, jewelry, cash, etc.—in the hotel safe when you're not using them, hang the "Do not Disturb" sign on the door implying your room is occupied.

Before taking a cab, ask the staff about directions and estimated costs to familiarize yourself with the area and avoid being taken advantage of by someone preying on a traveller.

Always verify who's at your hotel room door. Don't open the door to someone you don't know. If an unexpected visitor claims to be a hotel employee, call the front desk to confirm.

A black and white photograph of a woman with long dark hair, smiling and looking towards the camera. She is wearing a light-colored jacket. In the foreground, a light-colored suitcase is visible. The background shows a hotel room with a bed and a dark headboard.

**Don't invite strangers to your room. Don't needlessly announce or display guest room keys in public or carelessly leave them on restaurant tables, at the swimming pool, or in places where they can easily be stolen. If you lose your key, asked to have your room re-keyed immediately.**

**When returning to your hotel or motel late in the evening, use the main entrance of the hotel. Be observant and look around before entering parking lots.**

**If you see any suspicious activity, please report your observations to the management.**

# 8

## SAFETY TIPS PUBLIC PLACES



**GROCERY STORE PARKING LOTS ARE THE 1ST PLACE WOMEN ARE ABDUCTED OR ASSAULTED BY A STRANGER:**

**Office parking lots or garages are the 2nd place** women are abducted or assaulted by a stranger:

*The offender's objective is to grab a woman and quickly move her to a second, more secluded location - reducing the offender's chances of getting caught.*

► **Scan your surroundings**

► **Park in high visible, well lit areas and be mindful of suspicious activity.**

► **Avoid parking next to any vehicle that blocks your own vehicle from view, especially a van.**

► **Never leave your keys in your car, whether you're at the gas station or in the parcel pickup area.**

► **Limit the amount of time you spend idle in the car. Don't sit in your car and or talk on your cell phone, update your checkbook, make a list, or eat lunch. This creates a golden opportunity for a predator. He will climb in the passenger's side, place a gun to your head and instruct you to drive.**

- Never leave valuables in your car.
- Report any lights out or suspicious persons to store personnel or the police.
- Always carefully note where you parked so you don't spend unnecessary time walking around a parking lot.

# Public Places

## Walking to your parked car:

- Always be alert and aware. Have your car keys in your hand and be ready to unlock the door without delay.
- Any female walking alone, is potential prey for an assault. Shop with a friend or family member whenever possible.
- Walk purposefully and look confident. Assertive body language can help prevent an attack. Don't slouch...keep your head up. Look as though you would cause an uproar if bothered.
- If you carry a purse, don't dangle it by your side in such a way that a thief can run by you and grab it. Carry your purse close to your body - preferably carry a purse with a long strap that can go over and across your body.
- Try not to carry a lot of packages at once, as this makes you an easy target.
- When possible wear shoes and clothing that will not hinder an escape. Sneakers are best, shoes with low heels are your second best bet. Keep a pair in the car if you are going to be out on your way home from work. If you wear high heels and are pursued, kick them off and run barefoot.
- As you walk observe those around you. Notice if there are any strangers standing in your pathway. If so, choose an alternate route and by all means, avoid them.
- Stay away from isolated or poorly lit areas. Avoid walking near shrubbery which can hide attackers. Check the vehicles next to you. If a male is sitting alone in the seat closest to your car, go back in and find a trusted escort to walk you to your car.

**ENTER YOUR CAR THROUGH THE PASSENGERS DOOR IF YOU ARE PARKED NEXT TO A LARGE VEHICLE, ESPECIALLY A VAN.**

*(MOST SERIAL KILLERS PULL THEIR VICTIMS INTO A VAN WHILE THE VICTIM IS ATTEMPTING TO ENTER THEIR VEHICLE.)*



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# Public Places




- As you approach your car, look under and around it. Before getting in your car look in the back seat and on the floor.
- Don't place your purse or package on the roof of the car while loading other items.
- Always lock your car doors (even before you buckle up) and keep your windows closed both when driving and parked.

- Avoid helping strangers who ask for help getting out of their vehicles. Instead alert security or police.

## **If You Are Approached:**

If someone suspicious approaches your car, honk your car's horn. It's one of the loudest and fastest ways to scare off or let others know that you need help.





**Public restrooms are the 3rd place women are abducted or assaulted by a stranger.**


**A public restroom is a very isolated - usually with only one exit. This is an "ideal" location for many predators.**

**Before entering, first check that there are no persons loitering nearby who might follow you inside.**

**Select the first available stall. Sexual predators tend to linger in the back of restrooms.**

**If you see someone inside who makes you feel uncomfortable, leave immediately and go to a place where you feel safe.**

**Ladies you know the "unspoken" code: *always go to the restroom in pairs***



**ALWAYS** take the elevator instead of the stairs. Stairwells are ideal locations for predators.

Be near the front of an elevator, by the doors, ready to get off or on. Position yourself near the elevator control panel.

If you are attacked, press the alarm button and as many floor buttons as you can.

Trust your “sixth sense” OR “female intuition” - Don't ride the elevator with anyone you are not comfortable with.



# Public Places



## Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs)

Be careful when using an automatic teller machine, especially when getting cash. To increase your level of safety follow these basic guidelines:

- Try to use the ATM during daylight hours. If you have to get cash at night, go with someone else and only use machines that are visible from a major street and well lit.
- Use ATM's inside busy supermarkets when possible.
- Avoid any ATM near obvious hiding places.
- Look for suspicious people or activity.
- If you notice anything out of the ordinary, even if you have started a transaction, cancel your transaction and leave.
- When entering your secret code, use your body as a shield.
- Have your card ready and leave quickly. Do not count or display money at the ATM.
- Do not accept offers of help from anyone you don't know. If you have problems or questions contact your bank.
- When you use a drive-up ATM make sure your passenger windows are closed and all doors are locked
- Carry your purse close to your body or your wallet in an inside front pocket. Better yet, use a money pouch under your clothes. If you place your purse or carryon bag on the floor, place your foot through the strap.
- Don't draw attention to yourself by displaying large amounts of cash or expensive jewelry.
- Watch out for staged mishaps, like someone bumping into you or spilling a drink. Often it's a ploy to divert your attention from your valuables.

## If confronted:

- Don't argue with the robber. Throw the money in the opposite direction you need to move to safety.
- Don't fight with or attempt to follow the robber. Drive or walk to a safe place and immediately call police.

# 9

## SAFETY TIPS ON THE STREETS



**LIMIT YOUR DISTRACTIONS AND BE CONSCIOUS OF YOUR SURROUNDINGS.** *DON'T USE YOUR CELL PHONE, IPOD OR SEARCH IN YOUR PURSE FOR ITEMS.*

- Look like you are ready to respond to an encounter or put up a fight. Walk in an athletic manner with confidence. *Don't walk with your eyes down and appear submissive.*
- Stay in high-traffic, well-lit areas and travel in pairs or a group. *Don't drive or walk in bad locations.*
- Plan accordingly before you travel to a new destination. Drive or walk knowing where you are going and what you are doing. *Don't appear lost or look like a tourist.*

► **Recognize facial cues and body language that indicate hostile intent.**

► **Don't ignore your natural intuitions alerting you to the possibility of danger.**

- Predetermine a designated "sober" friend before you go out for social entertainment. Don't drink or use drugs.
- Look directly at people who approach or pass by you with confidence. Don't avoid eye contact with strangers and don't "stare or glare either."
- Avoid displaying a cocky or superior attitude and bring attention to cash or expensive jewelry. (This is a "trigger" for robbers and offenders. Many consider themselves "robin hoods") Be confident and don't flaunt material possessions.
- Avoid carrying large sums of money and unnecessary credit cards.

### **Suggestions:**

- Keep ten or fifteen dollars in your purse or wallet for "mugger money" just to satisfy a thief. Consider carrying a small purse for necessities instead of a large handbag.

# On the streets

Women can take several proactive steps to enhance their safety when using Uber or similar ride-hailing services. Here's a comprehensive guide:

## Before Booking Your Ride

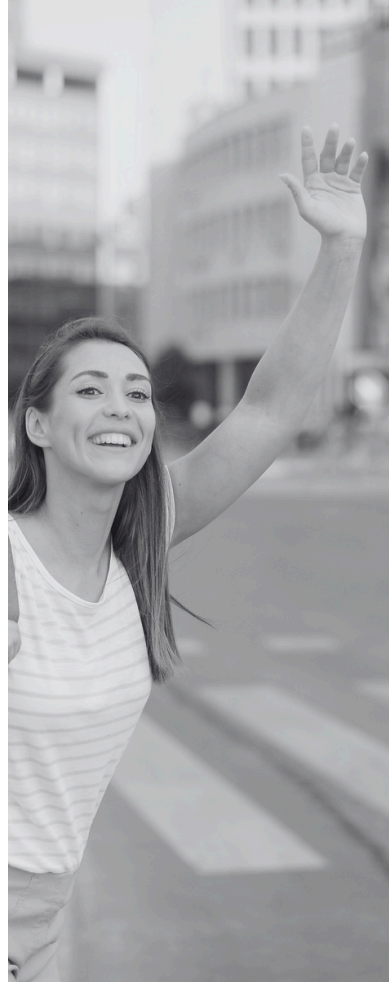
1. Choose a Safe Pickup Location:
  - Opt for well-lit, populated areas when waiting for your ride.
2. Enable Safety Features:
  - Use Uber's PIN Verification (if available) to ensure you're getting into the right car.
  - Set up Trusted Contacts in the app to share trip details.
3. Plan Ahead:
  - Familiarize yourself with the route or approximate duration of the trip.

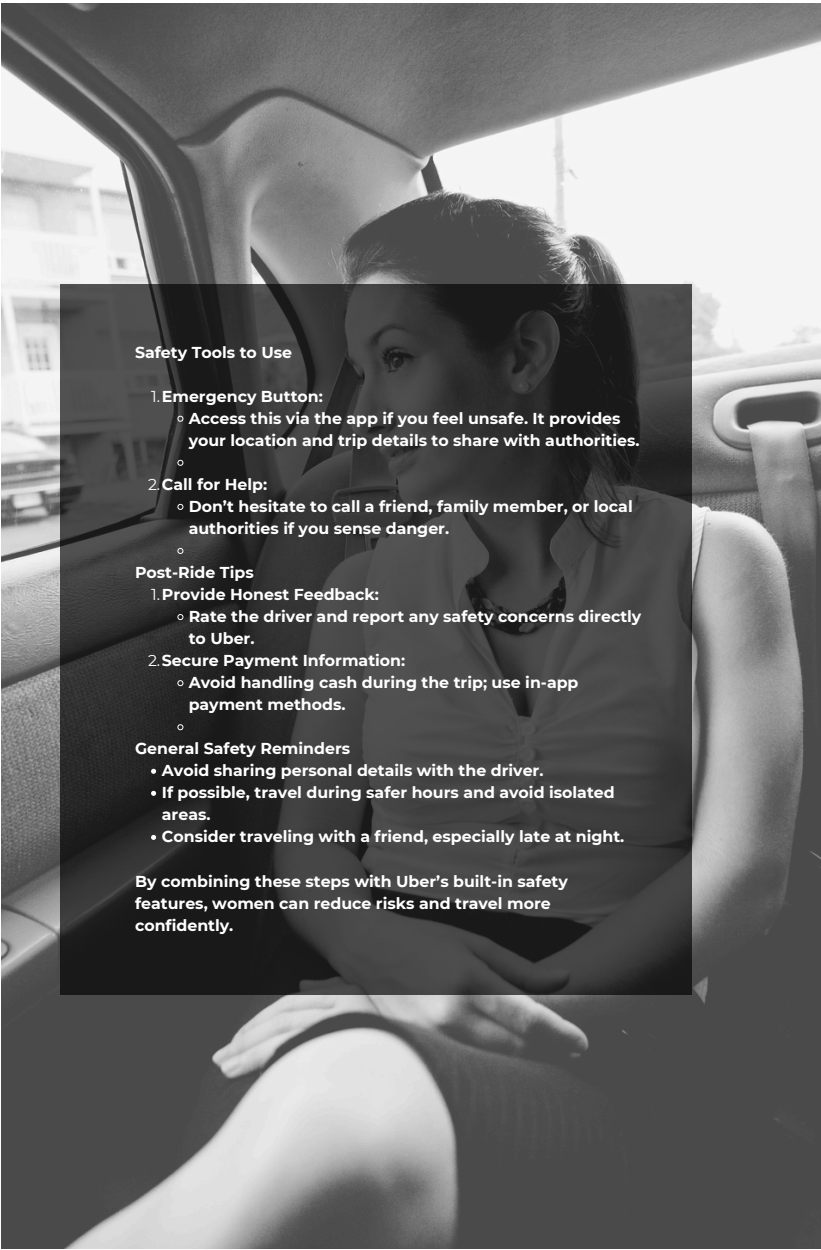
## When Your Ride Arrives

1. Verify the Driver:
  - Match the car's license plate, model, and color with the app.
  - Confirm the driver's name and photo before entering the vehicle.
  - Ask the driver who they're picking up (e.g., "Who are you here for?") instead of volunteering your name.
2. Check for PIN or Security Options:
  - Provide a PIN (if required) to confirm the driver and vehicle match your booking.

## During the Ride

1. Sit in the Back Seat:
  - This allows you to maintain personal space and provides easier access to either side of the vehicle.
2. Share Your Trip Details:
  - Use the Share My Trip feature to notify trusted friends or family of your location and ETA.
3. Stay Alert:
  - Monitor the route using the map in the app. Speak up or request a stop if the driver deviates significantly from the expected path.
  - Avoid distractions like excessive phone use or wearing headphones.
4. Trust Your Instincts:
  - If you feel uncomfortable, politely end the ride in a safe, public location.





### **Safety Tools to Use**

#### **1. Emergency Button:**

- Access this via the app if you feel unsafe. It provides your location and trip details to share with authorities.
- 

#### **2. Call for Help:**

- Don't hesitate to call a friend, family member, or local authorities if you sense danger.
- 

### **Post-Ride Tips**

#### **1. Provide Honest Feedback:**

- Rate the driver and report any safety concerns directly to Uber.

#### **2. Secure Payment Information:**

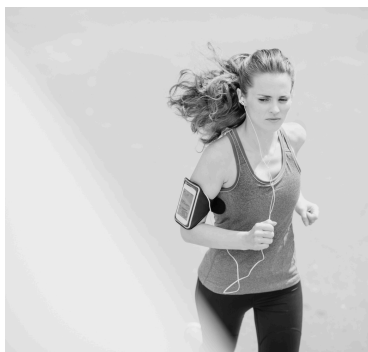
- Avoid handling cash during the trip; use in-app payment methods.
- 

### **General Safety Reminders**

- Avoid sharing personal details with the driver.
- If possible, travel during safer hours and avoid isolated areas.
- Consider traveling with a friend, especially late at night.

By combining these steps with Uber's built-in safety features, women can reduce risks and travel more confidently.

# On the streets



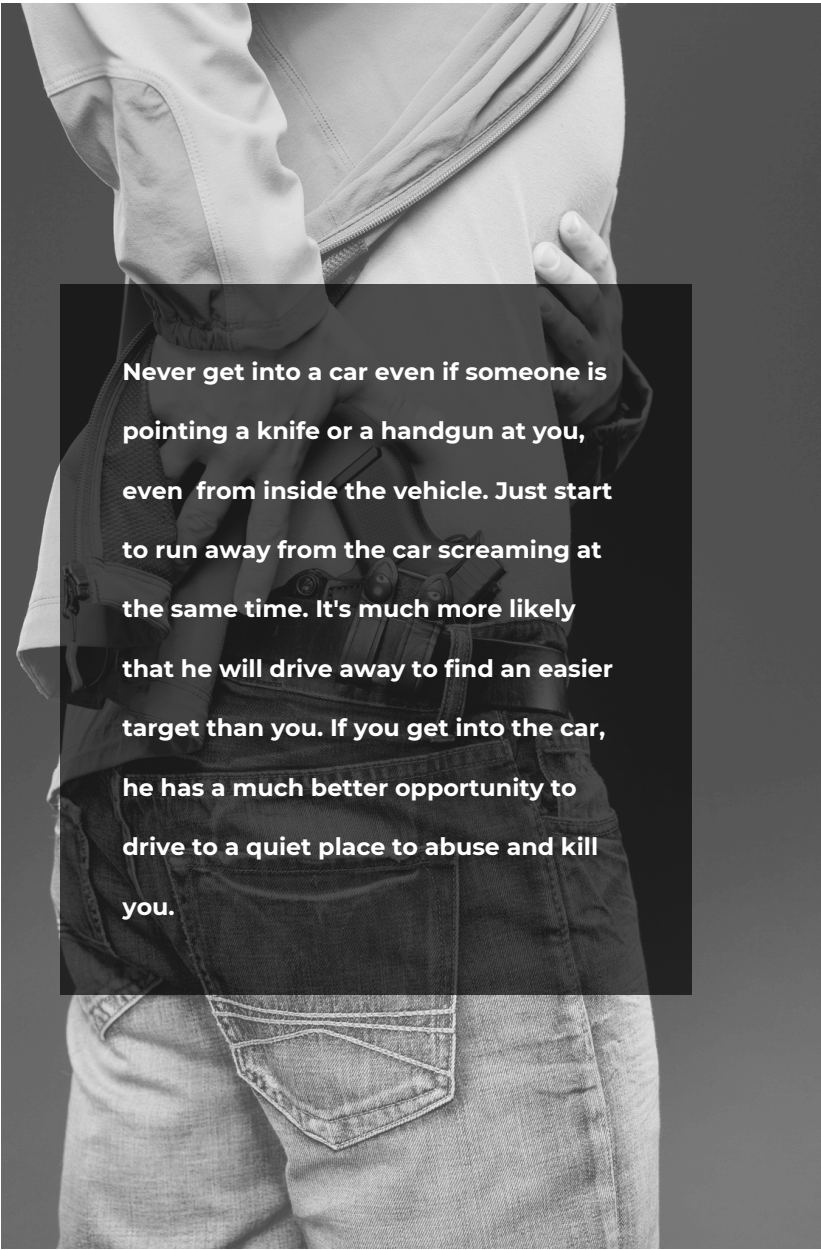
## **WALKER - JOGGERS**

**IF SHADOWED BY A CAR, RUN BACK IN THE DIRECTION FROM WHICH YOU CAME. IF YOU CONTINUE IN THE SAME DIRECTION, YOU WILL MAKE IT EASY FOR THE SHADOWING TO CONTINUE.**

- Don't use an ipod or walkman when walking in isolated areas at any time.
- **Regularly change your routines.**
- Mark out houses at intervals on each route you take that may be used as "safe houses" in the event of attack such as shops or houses that you know to be occupied by a friend or acquaintance. Try to incorporate these houses every time you vary your route.
- Be alert at all times. Don't presume that because your area has been "safe" thus far, that it will continue to be so.

## **If You Are Approached**

- If a car approaches you while you are walking or jogging, and you are harassed by the occupants, yell "FIRE" and run in the opposite direction so that the driver will have to turn around to pursue you.
- Keep your distance from someone who approaches you for directions. Stay out of the person's reach by staying several feet from the vehicle.
- If you feel that you are being followed, walk or run quickly to a lighted store or where crowds of people can offer help if needed. Know where to go for help police station, fire house, etc. **DO NOT GO HOME.**
- It's a good idea to keep a police whistle on your key chain. If you feel your personal safety is being threatened, follow your instincts. Do anything you can to draw attention. Don't be embarrassed. Yell, scream or blow a whistle.



**Never get into a car even if someone is pointing a knife or a handgun at you, even from inside the vehicle. Just start to run away from the car screaming at the same time. It's much more likely that he will drive away to find an easier target than you. If you get into the car, he has a much better opportunity to drive to a quiet place to abuse and kill you.**



### If Your Car Breaks Down

- You are an easy target if you are sitting in your car broken down. Predators search the highways for this exact scenario.
- **LOCK YOUR DOORS**, keep your windows closed.
- Use your cell phone to call for help.
- **NEVER HITCHHIKE.**
- If it's daylight on a business day, you may want to put your hazards on and walk to safety.
- If you have car trouble and are walking to look for help, always walk against the traffic so that you can see what is coming.
- If it's in the middle of the night, put on your warm clothes, and walk to a lighted area.
- If you're on a desolate road: walk away from the car. Go to some bushes, or some area AWAY from your vehicle. It might be uncomfortable, but you DO NOT want to stay in your car. There is no way a predator will be waiting in the bushes, knowing exactly when and where you were going to break down.
- Make every effort to avoid this scenario by ALWAYS keeping your car in good working order.
- Never pull your car over from a quiet road even if someone drives alongside your car pointing at the tires, etc. Always continue driving to a well-lit and crowded area before exiting your car. The problem might be a bluff and the driver wants you to stop at the side of the road to "help" you without a reason.
- Items to always keep in your vehicle for emergencies:
  - Blanket
  - Jacket
  - Boots or comfortable shoes
  - Flashlight
  - Cellphone
  - PORTABLE Cell Charger

# On the streets

## When in the car

- Keep your vehicle in good mechanical order with the gas tank at least half full.
- Travel well light busy streets, avoid shortcuts through unsafe areas.
- Instead of exiting your car and assisting strangers with car problems, call police (911) for help.
- Never pick up a hitchhiker. Be wary of people asking directions or handing out flyers.
- Never leave keys in ignition, even for short absences such as pumping gas, using ATM's or quick stop shopping.
- Stay alert and keep your vehicle in gear when stopped at stop signs and lights, or when otherwise stopped in traffic.
- If a suspicious car with flashing lights signals you to pull over, be cautious. Try to reach a well lit area. Stay locked in your vehicle. Ask to see the person's ID and verify that the picture matches the individual.
- If an aggressive driver confronts you, get out of the way. Avoid eye contact, ignore gestures or challenges such as speeding. Report to the police, the vehicle description, license number, description of driver and direction of travel.
- **If a car jacker threatens you with a gun or another weapon, don't argue - throw the keys in the opposite direction of a safe escape route. Run in a zig zag pattern to safety.** *Due to stress, a trained police officer only makes 4 in 10 shots within a 3 to 9 foot range. Your chances of being shot by an offender are 4 in 100 and most likely it you are hit, it will not be fatal! RUN!*
- **Do not go anywhere with a predator.** If you're told to get in a car, or follow a predator, do not do it. Run or fight, but do not allow yourself to be taken to a private place where a predator can take his time raping, torturing, or killing you. **There are no exceptions.**






# 10 ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS



## ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS IS BEING ALERT TO YOUR VISIBLE SURROUNDINGS.

Try the following to heighten your level of environmental awareness:

- ▶ Try a “role reversal” - Choose an environment and pretend you are a predator or a criminal. Canvas the entire area. Where would you wait for your next victim? In an alley connected to a busy street, a dark doorway, or in a parked van? Who in the crowd looks like an easy target? Is someone distracted on their cell phone, walking slower than the rest of the crowd, lack confidence or wearing expensive jewelry? Who would be the easiest to use the element of surprise on? Not only will this alert you to potential danger, it will assist you in recognizing any of your own behaviors that may make you an easy target.
- ▶ Mental surveillance - Scan your environment as you move through it. Take mental notes of everything you see and hear. Be specific; man with blue baseball cap and dark sunglasses, a white van with dark tinted windows and a damaged headlight, woman talking on cellphone, footsteps, etc... Include ideal locations for a predator to hide. Now turn around and see how well you observed this environment. This method takes practice - do not be discouraged if you cannot recall every detail at first.
- ▶ Have you ever been in a theme park and lost a friend or a family member in the crowd? Reflect on how you scrutinized the face of every individual until you located this person. Use this idea to observe others in your environment. Soon you will be able to identify and remember each person and what they were doing.



**Plan ahead. Be prepared. Practice heightening your awareness in familiar environments or places you frequent on a daily, weekly basis.**

- Home
- Work
- Shopping locations
- Parking lots and garages
- Parks and Recreational Facilities

**Use your environmental awareness to:**

- Spot potential danger
- Recognize the safest escape routes

# 11

## SITUATIONAL AWARENESS



**SITUATIONAL AWARENESS IS BEING ALERT TO YOUR IMMEDIATE CONDITIONS OR POSITION. YOU USE THIS AWARENESS TO SPOT INDIVIDUALS ACTING INAPPROPRIATE IN A PERSONAL OR SOCIAL SITUATION.**

Be alert to:

- an escalation in behaviors
- change in voice tone
- getting closer to you than is necessary
- behaving in a strange manner

An amateur criminal is easy to identify. It doesn't matter if you are an easy target or not, you just have to be in the wrong place, at the wrong time.

- usually walks with an attitude
- elbows pushed away from body
- verbally aggressive and rude to people within a few feet
- confrontations are usually triggered by eye contact


A seasoned criminal uses a technique known as interviewing to determine if you are an easy target.

**Distant Interview** - Takes place from a distance. This interview is done without direct interaction to determine a person's defensive capabilities. A criminal uses this method to regularly identify easy targets. Most criminals are in plain view, but due to a lack of situational awareness, the intended victim is clueless to their presence.

**Distraction Interview** - The criminal makes a simple request to distract the victim and get into position. An example of this is to ask for directions, help getting in or out of a vehicle, etc.

**Hostile Interview** - This type of interview is intended to confuse and provoke the victim with an onslaught of profanity and hostility.

**Escalating Interview** - Interaction with the criminal starts calm but quickly becomes hostile. With this technique, the criminal tests boundaries, intimidates and confuses the victim. It is not uncommon for this to occur within a "pack" situation.



**To defeat these interviewing techniques, you must be aware of who is watching you, maintain an assertive not aggressive presence, observe your boundaries and most importantly, stay calm. Your reactions verbal or physical can cause the situation to escalate.**

**Remember, the more time you spend on honing your awareness, the quicker you will be able to remove yourself from or react to a potentially dangerous situation.**

# 12

## WHAT'S IN YOUR PURSE



**There are pros and cons to including a selfdefense weapon as part of your safety plan. The worst being a child gaining access and being harmed by one of these weapons. Way your options carefully before determining if using one of these weapons is right for you.**

**Keep in mind there is always the risk that any weapon you use, including environmental weapons i.e. vase, cooking pan, ashtray...these items can be taken away and used by your attacker.**

**Pepper Spray** - Pepper spray is Oleoresin Capsicum. When sprayed in an attackers face it creates a burning sensation. Some models require you to pump the top once to emit a single spray, while other versions are aerosol and pressing the trigger releases a steady stream.

**Pros:** Effective from 6 to 8 feet away, allowing plenty of distance between a victim and an attacker. Can render an attacker harmless for 20-30 minutes. Readily available and inexpensive. Legal in most cities and states (although there are exceptions). Portable and easy to carry. Key chain version without a case suggested.

**Cons:** In windy conditions, the spray could blow back affecting you instead of the attacker. Although simple to use, requires practice to ensure the accuracy of your aim. In a panic situation, may be difficult to remove from your pocket, or out of your purse. The locking mechanism on the trigger used to prevent accidental discharges can be difficult to disengage.

**Stun Gun** - A stun gun is a small, handheld item that must make physical contact with the attacker to work. The gun uses two small probes that, once in contact with an attacker's skin, release a high voltage, low amperage charge. This charge will temporarily disable an attacker for several minutes, allowing you to escape to safety.

**Pros:** Inexpensive and small-they can be held in the palm of your hand. The shock will not transmit to you if you are in contact with the attacker.

**Cons:** You need to be close to the attacker to use. Reported times vary from a few seconds to a few minutes that your attacker is disabled - providing only a small window of escape time.

# What's in your purse?



**Taser** - A taser shoots two probes that penetrate the skin of an attacker. Once the probes have attached, you pull the trigger. Electrical charges will be sent from the taser through the body of the attacker, rendering him immobile. It is not essential, however, that the probes penetrate the assailant's skin; a taser current can jump up to 2 inches and still render its target immobile.

**Pros:** The ability to disable an attacker from up to 15 feet away. Effective means of self-defense, especially when used against someone who threatens use of a knife or blunt weapon. Allows you to maintain a safe distance from an attacker.

**Cons:** Although quite rare, there has been the occasional report of death from taser shock, increasing the potential liability when using this weapon. If the assailant regains their senses and removes the probes, you now face a very angry attacker ready to inflict additional harm.

**Knife** - It is not necessary to carry a huge hunting knife. Smaller versions that are disguised as other items, such as a pen or a lipstick tube are available through security stores.

**Pros:** Simple to use and semi-readily available. Portable and easy to carry. Depending on the size of the knife, it's probably legal in your city or state.


**Cons:** Requires close contact with attacker. Can be taken from you and used against you. Requires a certain amount of skill or training to use effectively.

**Gun** - Whether you opt for a handgun or shotgun, these weapons are extremely lethal. Guns as weapons are a very personal choice, and it's something you need to decide for yourself.

**Pros:** Extremely effective. Can be used at a distance. May work as a deterrent if you use it to threaten your attacker.

**Cons:** Laws vary, and carrying a gun always requires obtaining a license. Can be taken from you and used against you. May result in lethal household accidents or tragedies. Requires training for safe and proper use.

Always check your local and state laws regarding self-defense weapons. Get proper training so you can handle the weapon when the time comes.



**Important Numbers**  
**National Domestic Violence**  
**Hotline 800-799-SAFE (7233)**

**800-787-3224 TTY**

**[thehotline.org](http://thehotline.org)**

**Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network**  
**(RAINN)**

**Hotline 800-656-HOPE (4673)**

**[rainn.org](http://rainn.org)**

**The National Teen Dating Abuse**

**Help Line 866-331-9474**

**866-331-8453 TTY**

**[loveisrespect.org](http://loveisrespect.org)**

**National Center for Victims of Crime,**  
**Stalking Resource Center**

**[victimsofcrime.org](http://victimsofcrime.org)**



**Please know:**

- *Prevention strategies* are self-defense
- *Understanding violence* against women is self-defense
- *Tactical training* is self-defense

**One of these three aspects of self-defense, without the others, leaves you at a tremendous risk for violence.**

**The anomaly of self-defense is that the more prepared you are, the less likely you are to need it. Once you can recognize and respond effectively to a potentially threatening situation, you are more confident in your every day activities. You are also far less likely to become a target of violence or crime.**



The YGG Fitness & Self-defense program is dedicated to all women who have survived or lost their lives to an act of violence.



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