



WOMEN Safety Tips



Northwest Area Command Crime Prevention Office

Sexual assault is a violent crime. You are your own best protection and you are not helpless - have a plan.

Use the **SAFE** concept:

S = secure at home, working, shopping, walking and driving.

A = avoid all situations where you might endanger yourself.

F = flee and run as fast as you can from danger.

E = engage or encounter, fight only as a last resort.

Three important reasons women are easy targets for random acts of violence are:

- ! **Lack of Awareness** - you must know where you are and what's going on around you.
- ! **Body Language** - keep your head up, swing your arms, stand straight up, but be discreet and do not draw attention to yourself.
- ! **Wrong Place, Wrong Time** - do not walk alone in an alley, or drive in a bad neighborhood at night.

AT HOME

1. Mailboxes - use initials or last name only.
2. Use deadbolts on doors, including the bedroom door.
3. Make sure you have good lighting around your property - dusk-to-dawn and motion detector lights are good.
4. Install larger wide angle door viewers.
5. Front security doors are good to talk to people without opening your main house door.
6. Close shades and blinds at night.
7. Never expose yourself while dressing or undressing in front of windows, even on the second floor.
8. Obscene calls- quietly hang up. Call the police if they persist or change your number. Do not accept calls that have Caller ID blocks.
9. Install secondary locks on windows and doors. Go to a large hardware store to see availability.
10. Install a strong deadbolt on your bedroom door. Keep a phone near your bed.
11. If you suspect anyone is in your home when arriving, call the police. **9-1-1** for emergencies, **3-1-1** for non-emergencies. **DO NOT GO INSIDE**.
12. Pepper spray is a good defense at home and when out, but it is not fool proof. Go to a gun store or large sporting goods store to find it. Take a self-defense class.



WALKING & SHOPPING

1. Use the buddy system and do not go alone. Avoid isolation when shopping or being out and about.
2. Do not accept rides from strangers.
3. If you are ever thrown into the trunk of a car, kick out the back taillights and stick your arm out the hole and start waving like crazy. The driver won't see you but everybody else will. This has saved lives. Also, some trunks have a trunk release cord.
4. People have a tendency to get into their cars after shopping, eating, working, etc., and just sit doing their checkbook, or making a list, etc. Look around approaching your vehicle and then lock it immediately upon entering.
5. Take an elevator or escalator instead of the stairs. Try not to be alone even in the elevator.
6. Do not dangle your purse or leave it in a shopping cart as you browse. Only carry essential items.
7. Do not linger in dark areas. Criminals like darkness.
8. If you drive over to the park to walk your dog, carry only your driver's license, protection item like pepper spray, noise maker like a whistle, and your cell phone.
9. If something looks suspicious, in populated areas go into a mall store or if driving pull into a convenience store for gas. Be aware if you think you are being followed or observed - call the police.



DRIVING and PARKING

- * Make sure your vehicle is properly serviced and fueled - use a roadside assistance company.
- * When driving lock all the doors and have the windows rolled up.
- * Keep valuables out of sight.
- * Do not stop for disabled drivers - call on your cell phone for service. Do **not** pick up hitchhikers.
- * If your vehicle is disabled - stay in the locked vehicle. Call your auto club for service.
- * **Always** park under light and as near the front door of a business as possible.
- * Do not take unfamiliar routes and try to go in the daytime.



HELPING THE POLICE

Write down the physical description of the suspect:

- race, age, height, weight, build, complexion, hair.
- clothing - hat, coat, jacket, suit, trousers, shirt, tie, shoes, glasses.
- scars, tattoos

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- Did the suspect say anything? Write it down immediately.
- Types of weapons
- Did they use a name?
- What were their mannerisms?
- What was the direction of escape?
- What was the make of vehicle, color, and year?
- What was the license plate number/letters - even a partial number is valuable
- Were there others involved?

The crime scene:

- Do not touch anything - do not shower - call **9-1-1** immediately.
- Witnesses or others should not discuss the incident until the police arrive.
- Do not talk to media personnel.