



Holiday Security Tips



Historically, the holiday season is one of the highest crime periods of the year. Many people have their gifts stolen while they carry them out of stores, from their parked vehicles, and from their homes. The Office of Security encourages you to take the following precautions as you prepare for the upcoming holidays:

Before You Shop:

- Consider using a fanny pack or deep pockets in clothing to hold what you need instead of carrying a purse.
- Carry small amounts of cash.
- Carry your keys, cash and credit cards separate from each other.
- Be extremely careful using ATM machines. Try to use them in populated places and pay close attention to what's going on around you.
- If you're not sure a shopping bag will be available to you, take one of your own. Consolidate as many packages as possible.

While Shopping:

- If you do carry a purse or bag, carry it close to your body and always zipped. Do not sling the strap across your body, however. If the bag is grabbed you could be injured.
- Park strategically - as close to the store entrance as possible. Park in well-lit areas. Avoid parking next to large vehicles, bushes, or dumpsters.
- Remember exactly where you park your car. Make a mental note or write it down so you will know exactly where to go when you are ready to leave.

After Shopping:

- Leave the store well before closing time. This way, there is greater assurance you will walk out with other people. There is safety in numbers.
- Avoid shopping until you are exhausted. You are more alert when you are less tired.
- When hurried or in a crowded shop, make sure you get all forms of ID and credit cards returned to you before leaving.
- Ask for security to escort you to your vehicle if you have a lot of packages or if you are leaving at night.
- Check around, underneath, and inside your car as you approach it. You don't want to be taken by surprise by a criminal.
- Keep your packages stored out of sight in the trunk of your car if you are going to continue shopping at another location.

At Home:

- Keep gifts hidden from view through outside windows.
- After opening gifts, break down cardboard boxes to avoid revealing your purchase of expensive electronics or other valuable items.