



PERSONAL SAFETY

IN YOUR HOME

Draw drapes or close blinds after dark. Ensure outside doors, door locks and door frames are sturdy, including those in attached garages. Doors and windows should be visible; cut down or move anything that blocks visibility. Install a 180° peephole in your door. Never answer a door without knowing who it is and do not open your door to strangers. Being polite is not the issue, being safe is. If a stranger asks to use your phone, offer to make the call yourself. Keep your doors locked at all times, even when you are home. Keep your garage door closed when you are in the house or the back yard. List only your initials and last name on your mailbox or telephone book. Do not list your first name or indicate gender. Never give out personal information unless you know who it is. Have emergency numbers on or near your phone. Make sure that all entrances are well-lit. Install a light timer or motion sensor. Have your keys ready as you approach the door. Do not hide keys outside. Be aware of your surroundings and evaluate your situation so you can make decisions about your safety. Stay alert in laundry rooms, parkades, and elevators and avoid dark or secluded streets.

IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Be assertive and alert when walking. Attackers seek victims who appear intimidated, vulnerable or preoccupied. Plan your route ahead of time before going for a walk and let others know where you are going and when you expect to be back. Walk with a friend whenever possible. Observe your surroundings. If you are hesitant about a certain area, follow your instincts. Stay on busier, well-lit streets. Avoid dark or concealed areas and never assume parked vehicles are empty. Do not overload yourself with items which may block your view or reduce your mobility. If you are being followed, quickly assess your options. Can you run, change directions or cross the street? Are there people nearby or a well-lit area to move towards? Never hitchhike or accept rides from strangers. If you are suspicious of someone, trust your instincts. Carry your valuables securely. Hold your purse, do not leave it unattended, in a bag or in a cart. Do your banking during the daytime. Do not carry more money than is necessary. Get to know your neighbours and look out for each other.



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SELF DEFENSE TIPS

Always be alert and aware of your environment. Is there a place you could run to or are there people nearby who could hear you if you screamed? There is no perfect answer to a situation. Do the best you can to respond. Know what you would be prepared to do to an attacker to get away. Keys, bags and umbrellas can be weapons. That works for both you and an attacker. Be rude and cause a scene. This will draw attention to you—something the attacker does not want. Be assertive, make eye contact with the attacker speak in a firm and confident voice and use short, simple sentences. Sometimes physical resistance may be effective. Immediate and forceful resistance may throw the attacker off guard and give you time to escape. Stay calm as best you can and look for opportunities to escape or alert someone. Consider carrying an emergency whistle or personal safety alarm

IF YOU ARE SUSPICIOUS

Pay attention to people or vehicles that act suspicious or are out of place (moving slowly, looking into cars or houses, vehicles parked in one location for a long time without moving, etc.). Pay attention to noises such as screaming, gunshots and repeated barking of dogs that are normally quiet. Note as much detail as possible: descriptions of people/vehicles including license plate, colour, age, clothing, unique characteristics.

IF YOU HAVE BEEN ASSAULTED

Remember it was not your fault and there was no 'right' way to do things. Call the police immediately. They will come to assist and arrange for EMS. Don't wash yourself or change your clothes because they may have evidence of your attacker. Don't clean up the scene—leave everything where it is. Don't consume anything. Try to remember and write down as many details about the incident as you can. Be honest about what happened. Cooperate with the police to assist them in their investigation