



12 Holiday Safety Tips

Here's a countdown of 12 safety tips for the holidays. Stay safe while shopping and at parties.

1. Be alert and aware! It's easy to be distracted by the crowds, selecting the right gift, and being preoccupied with holiday activities. Maintain confident body language so criminals pass you over for a "softer" target.
2. Keep shopping bags, valuables, purses, and wallets close to you. Keep purses or bags closed. The more expensive an item, the closer to your body it should be. Keep a firm grip.
3. Supervise children at all times. If you feel you will be distracted from supervising them while shopping, make arrangements for a babysitter. Older children should take a friend with them when going shopping.
4. Recognize that there is safety in numbers. Shop with friends and relatives instead of going alone so you can look out for each other. Make sure everyone maintains awareness and is not distracted by each other's company.
5. Return to your vehicle frequently to unload purchases in the trunk. If you have to put them in the passenger compartment, put them on the floor and cover with a blanket. Unloading your bags frequently reduces the amount you have to carry. Also, move the car to another parking space afterward.
6. Watch out for loiterers near your car. Get a security guard for assistance if one is available.
7. Park in a well-lit, well-trafficked area of the parking lot at stores and malls. Avoid secluded and dark areas, as confrontations won't be seen and yells for help won't be heard.
8. Have your keys in your free hand well before approaching the car. It will save time getting into the car and the keys can be used as an improvised weapon if necessary. Lock the door immediately after getting in.
9. Watch out for friendly strangers. They may ask a question or offer to assist you with your bags to distract you or put you in a compromising situation.
10. When shopping online, make sure you are dealing with a reputable online store. At checkout, before entering your payment information, make sure the page is encrypted and secure. Keep your anti-virus, anti-phishing software up to date. Check the return policy before placing your order.
11. After opening gifts, don't advertise to criminals of your big ticket item with your trash. Tear down and cut up product boxes into small pieces to fit into garbage and recycling cans.
12. At parties, always watch your drink and don't let it out of your sight.