

# Personal Safety

It's not unusual to have concerns about personal safety, whether you're out in public or surfing online. These steps will help protect you from the criminal actions of others:

- ▶ Pay attention to the people around you and your surroundings. Avoid using shortcuts that could limit your ability to escape from a threatening situation. Do not use headphones when you are walking or running by yourself.
- ▶ If you are meeting someone for the first time, choose a public location. Tell a friend where you will be and schedule a check-in time.
- ▶ If you think you are being followed, do not go into a restroom, parking structure, or other isolated area. Stay around other people and notify a police officer, security, or the location's management.
- ▶ Never let your gas tank fall below one-quarter full. When traveling at night, stop at well-lit locations. On road trips, check in with a friend or family member by a specific time each night.
- ▶ Use caution when opening your door to strangers. If utility or repair people want to come inside, ask to see an ID or call and verify the person's identity. Keep your doors and windows locked.
- ▶ Ask a trusted friend or neighbor to check your house and collect your mail when you are out



of town. Consider keeping a few lights turned on inside the house while you're away.

- ▶ Keep your cell phone charged at all times. If you need to call 911 from your home, it's best to use a landline (if you have one).
- ▶ Do not post your address, phone number, or other key identifying information on social media sites. Avoid providing specifics about when you will be away from home or posting detailed travel itineraries.
- ▶ When creating passwords, choose a combination of letters and numbers and avoid birth dates or other accessible information. Do not use the same password for multiple websites. Only give out your Social Security number when absolutely necessary and on a secure (https://) site.

For more ideas on how to stay safe in different situations, contact LifeMatters. Help is available 24/7/365.

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