

Guidelines for Personal Safety

Situations

Be alert - Avoid getting into trouble in the first place. Be alert, and aware of your surroundings. Don't go alone.

Avoid the Coyote Syndrome -



Coyotes attack vulnerable prey--even small children. In like manner, predators "interview" their potential victims to determine if they are an easy mark. Learn to carry yourself with confidence--to be assertive - to fail the interview. Don't be aggressive, loud, or confrontational; don't be timid, submissive, or passive.

If you are approached by a predator, NEVER go to a second crime scene, even if they have a gun or knife.

Purse snatchers - Carry your purse securely, but if someone grabs the strap, let go rather than being dragged along the parking lot/sidewalk.

ATMs - Be alert! Don't go alone; don't establish an observable pattern for the timing of transactions; stay away from isolated machines - especially when it is dark. If in your car, ensure you cannot be hemmed in and keep your car in drive. Don't show your cash.

Pulled over by "police" - - If someone in an unmarked car - even with a dashboard or roof light - signals for you to pull over, proceed to a public area. Keep your window up, doors locked, and engine running. If you stop, ask for a uniformed officer in a marked car. You can call 911.

Jogging or walking - Do not go alone; don't wear headphones; don't go to isolated locations; vary your time and your jogging route. Carry a very LOUD alarm that you can set off quickly. In this and all situations, carry a cell phone.

Secure your home - Solid core or metal outside doors; use deadbolt locks; don't buy cheap, off-brand locks; use long screws in door jam for safety from burglary; keep bushes away from your windows; install an alarm system; get a dog (one who is noisy at the right time); install outside motion-sensor lights. Start or join a neighborhood watch program.

Don't enter your home if there is evidence of an intruder. Do not answer the door for someone you do

not really know. Don't fall for tricks to get you to open the door - e.g., upon hearing the outside water running; in response to a baby's cry; stepping outside to help an apparently injured person, etc. Do call 911.

Think you're being followed? - Drive straight to the nearest police station.

Carjacked? If something looks suspicious when you enter a parking area, return to a safe place and alert security. If someone enters your car when you are boxed in by other cars, kick, bite and scratch if necessary to escape the car. Whether you are behind the wheel or in the passenger seat, and the car is moving, crash the car and escape. Beware of scams--maybe someone has put a leak in your tire and invites you to step out to look at it. DON'T GET OUT. Keep driving to a safe location. Beware of fender-benders - never pull off into a deserted area. Lock windows and doors when you are in your car.

Feel uneasy? LISTEN TO YOUR GUT! Err on the side of caution and safety, even if quite inconvenient.

Mall parking; parking garages - Cancel your plans if you are going to be alone in an isolated area. Be alert - even more public areas in daylight may be unsafe. Use a parking garage where you can be escorted by security. Be aware of your surroundings. Look around, in, and under your car as you approach. Unlock only one door when arriving at your car, if possible.

Out of shape? Get in shape and stay in shape--get sufficient restful sleep, eat healthy, and exercise--aerobic, core, strength, power, skilled movement (balance/coordination/agility), and flexibility.



Carry a weapon? If you choose to be armed, KNOW THE LAW, get trained and licensed for firearms, and handle them with utmost caution, ensuring that no child can get to them(get a gun safe). If you carry a firearm, consider joining an organization such as the United States Concealed Carry Association (USCCA) and purchase insurance.

Mace, especially, may not stop some attackers. (Mace is an irritant; pepper spray is an inflammatory chemical.) A stun gun can disable an attacker but requires direct contact with the predator. A Taser can disable from a distance of 15 feet. (Ideal effective distance is 7 to 10 feet away from your target.)