



St. Johns County Sheriff's Office

"Taking Care of People"

Personal Safety Tips

Always remember, be aware of your surroundings and stay alert. Virtually all activities in life entail some level of risk. With the following precautions, you'll minimize criminal opportunities.

On The Street

- Never hitchhike
- Be very careful using outside ATMs at night or in unfamiliar surroundings.
- Try not to overload yourself with packages or other items. Keep your hands as free as possible.
- Do not wear music headphones while running, jogging, or walking.
- If you carry a purse, carry it close to your body. Carry no more money or credit cards than you absolutely need.

In A Building

- Avoid isolated corridors or hallways
- Be extra careful in stairwells and isolated or poorly lit restrooms
- Avoid entering an elevator occupied by only one other person and stand near the emergency button.

In Your Home

- Always keep your doors locked whether you are home or not.
- Check who is at your door before opening it, and do not open the door to an unexpected visitor.
- Ask for photo identification for all repair persons. If you are suspicious, call to verify employment.
- Do not post your full name on your mail box, in the telephone directory, or on your answering machine.
- Do not leave a schedule of times you are away on your answering machine.
- Know which of your neighbors you can trust and depend upon in an emergency
- Never give personal information to others unless you know what it is being used for.
- Charge your cell phone next to your bed. Should someone attempt to break into your home during the night, they might cut the line to your home phone.

In Your Car

- Keep your car in good working order and keep the gas tank at least half full
- When approaching your parked vehicle, visually check the area around the vehicle for any suspicious persons or activity. If you observe anything suspicious, walk to where there are other people and call your local law enforcement.
- Always park in visible, well-lit areas.
- In a parking lot, avoid parking next to a van or large pick up truck
- Have your keys ready when approaching your vehicle to reduce the time needed to enter.
- Do not pick up hitchhikers
- Any valuables in your car should be placed in the trunk or otherwise kept out of sight.
- Exercise extra caution when using underground and enclosed parking garages.
- When stopped at traffic lights or in traffic, allow space between you and the vehicle in front of you so you can drive away if necessary.
- If someone approaches your vehicle and attempts to enter, blow your horn to attract attention and drive away if possible.
- Do not open your window if someone approaches your vehicle.
- Never leave house keys attached to car keys at service stations or parking facilities
- If you are being followed, don't drive home. Drive to an open gas station or other business where you can attract attention and safely call local law enforcement.
- If you break down on the side of the road, keep your windows up and doors locked and turn on your emergency flashers.
- If you chose to leave your vehicle, walk against traffic and never get into a strangers vehicle.

For more information about personal safety, contact the Community Affairs Unit and ask for the Crime Prevention Deputy. Call 904.824.8503