

# Holiday Crime Prevention

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Christmas and the holiday shopping season is a peak time for crimes such as home burglaries, thefts, and even muggings. This brochure contains valuable tips that can help prevent you from being the victim of a crime during the holidays.

## **At Home**

Be extra cautious about locking doors and windows at all times.

Don't display gifts and other valuables where they can be seen from a window or doorway.

If you go out in the evening, turn on lights and a radio or television so the house looks occupied.

If you go on vacation, get an automatic timer for your lights. Ask a neighbor or trusted friend to watch your house, pick up the mail and newspapers and park their car in your driveway from time to time.

Beware of package deliveries where couriers have the "wrong" address. Write down tag numbers of suspicious delivery attempts.

After Christmas, don't advertise your new electronics and/or other new valuables that you have just received by putting the boxes out on the curb for the garbage collectors. Break the boxes down and fold them to where the words are on the inside.

## **Shopping**

Stay alert to your surroundings and the people around you. If you see people "hanging around" parking garages, parking lots, or the outside of stores, avoid the area. Notify the police or security department.

Shop before dark if possible. Coordinate shopping trips with a friend if you plan to be out late. Never park your car in an unlit area, no matter how convenient it is.

Lock your car doors and windows even if you are only gone for a few minutes.

Keep packages and other valuables out of public view, preferably locked in the trunk.

Park near street lights if possible and have your keys in hand when you return to your car. Always check the interior of your car **before** you unlock the door to get in.

To discourage purse snatchers, don't overburden yourself with packages. Have your purchases delivered whenever practical.

Avoid carrying large amounts of cash. Pay for purchases with a check or credit card whenever possible.

Be extra careful with purses and wallets. Carry a purse under your arm with the strap across your body. Keep a wallet in an inside jacket pocket, not a back trouser pocket.

Teach your children to go to a store clerk or security guard and ask for help if they should become separated in a store or shopping mall. They should never go into a parking lot alone.