

Robbery Prevention Tips

Definitions:

Armed Robbery

- A person commits the offense of robbery in the first degree if he or she forcibly steals property and in the course thereof he or she, or another participant in the offense:
 1. Causes serious physical injury to any person; or
 2. Is armed with a deadly weapon; or
 3. Uses or threatens the immediate use of a dangerous instrument against any person; or
 4. Displays or threatens the use of what appears to be a deadly weapon or dangerous instrument

Strong Arm Robbery

- A person commits the offense of robbery in the second degree if he or she forcibly steals property and in the course thereof causes physical injury to another person.

Street Smart

If you're going to buy something on Craigslist/LetGo/Facebook and others, there are a few safety precautions you should take.

- Use the police internet exchange zones located at each patrol division. This should **ALWAYS** be your first choice to exchange items.
- Check out the seller's information. Ask for a phone number and an address. Take that information, and then check the names of the seller online to find out who you are dealing with.
- Ask a lot of questions. Ask as many questions as you can before going to buy the product. If the seller can't answer your questions, there is a good chance that he doesn't actually have the product, and could be setting you up.
- Don't buy from sellers who only list an email address. This is a **HUGE RED FLAG**. If they don't list their phone number, the seller usually has something to hide.
- Meet in a public place. Criminals don't want witnesses; meeting in a public place like a coffee shop or cafe can help ensure your safety. Most of the criminals are looking for an easy target and are not very likely to rob you in a cafe full of people.
- If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. A lot of these scams are pretty easy to spot. If the deal sounds too good to be true, you are better off passing it up.
- Never go to a second location. If you arrive at the predetermined meeting place and the seller asks to go to another place, this should raise some serious red flags. There is no reason for a seller to ask you to go somewhere else.
- Don't go alone. You should always have someone with you who can watch your back.

- Show up early. If you are meeting in a public location, show up early and scope out the area. Watch for the seller, and make sure everything looks legit. If you have even the slightest concern that something seems out of place, trust your instincts and leave.

Running, Jogging and Walking

- Do not work out alone.
- Advise someone of your workout times and route taken and check in with them when finished.
- Do not work out in deserted or dark areas.
- Have several different routes and rotate them.
- Check your workout route before you start.
- Get to know the neighborhood of your workout routes.
- Avoid bushes, doorways, and alleys during your workout.
- Plan safe locations on your route, well-populated areas where you can go to for help.
- Do not carry large amounts of cash or jewelry.
- Do carry personal identification, with an emergency contact phone number.
- Carry a whistle or some type of noise-making device.
- Stay alert and scan the area in front of you and anyone or anything that makes you feel uneasy.
- Every now and then during your workout check the area behind you.
- Be careful when people stop you for directions, always reply from a distance, and never get too close to a vehicle.
- If you think someone is following, change directions or go to your safe location.
- Carry a cellular phone when possible.
- Report suspicious persons or incidents to the police as soon as possible.
- Know the phone numbers to police and have them available.

Vehicle Safety

- Park in a well-lighted area so you can see your car and the surroundings from as far away as possible.
- Have your car key ready before you approach the car so that you can make your entry into the vehicle as quickly as possible. When you are looking for your keys, you may be distracted from what is going on around you. Glance into the back seat and floor boards of your car before you enter and check for anyone who may be hiding inside. This is particularly important if you drive a van-type vehicle.
- Always lock all doors whether you are in or out of your car. Keep the windows rolled up enough so an arm cannot be inserted through the opening.
- If you think you are being followed, do not go home. Go to a safe place such as a police station, fire station, business or other populated area.

Home Safety

- Keep your doors and windows locked. Too often, criminals get into homes through unlocked doors and windows.
- Consider installing solid core entry doors with reinforced door frames and dead bolt locks.

- Identify a "safe room" inside the home where residents can go in an emergency. This room should have reinforced doors, an exit to the outside and a telephone.
- Always verify by telephone that the person works for the company they say they represent and has been sent for a reason. A peephole with a 180 degree viewing angle is excellent for you to verify who is on the other side of your door.
- Never open your door to anyone you do not know. Exterior lighting provides additional protection from intruders. Remember that criminals may hide in shadows.
- Always acknowledge a caller at your door to determine who they are and what they want. Some burglars ring the door bell, and if there is no answer, they break in.
- Have family discussions to prepare all members of your family to become thoroughly familiar with your home safety plan. Mentally review as often as possible the actions you must perform if confronted with an emergency. The plan should become "second nature" to you.
- Be Informed -- Be Prepared.

How to Prevent Package Theft

- Have packages delivered to your work. Delivering packages to a job increases visibility and reduces the chances that your packages might be swiped unexpectedly.
- Schedule deliveries for times you will be home. This keeps packages from sitting unattended for long periods of time.
- Buddy up with a neighbor.
- Require a signature. This extra insurance ensures that you won't have packages piling up at your door.
- Consider using a smart locker. Smart lockers secure your packages until you can make it home and retrieve them.
- Try a lockbox. Lockboxes can be used to protect packages until you can make it home and retrieve them.
- Package Guard. This service uses a weighted scale to keep track of your packages and sounds an alarm if packages are unexpectedly removed. An app also lets you stay updated on the status of your deliveries.
- Doorman. Doorman will pick up your packages and re-deliver them to your home during a scheduled window.
- Require vacation Package Hold to secure package delivery.
- Monitor your front porch. Security cameras or video doorbells can be used to keep an eye on your packages, deterring thieves from grabbing them off of your property.

Home Robbery Tips / After the Robbery

- Call the police immediately after the robbery. The person who calls the police should be able to stay on the phone if the dispatcher requests.
- Lock all doors and ask all witnesses to remain until the officers arrive. If a witness must leave, obtain his or her name, address and telephone number.
- All witnesses should write down a description of all the suspects. Do not discuss the robbery or compare notes about the robber's appearance with anyone.
- Protect the crime scene. Do not touch anything.

- If the robbers touched anything while in your house, please do not allow anyone to handle it, if needed, put in a safe place to give to police. This may be an important piece of evidence.

Robbery Prevention for Businesses

Be Observant

Employees and employers should remain alert and observant.

Several things to watch for:

- Suspicious persons or vehicles around the business, especially at opening and closing time.
- People wearing inappropriate clothing for the weather, such as heavy coats during warm weather.
- Have a plan.
- Have regular safety meetings to develop and discuss your "plan". Some of the elements of a good plan include:
 1. Employee demeanor during a robbery (do not resist)
 2. How to notify the police
 3. An escape route
 4. How to obtain a suspect description
 5. How to obtain a vehicle description and license plate number
 6. Have prearranged signals between employees
 7. How to activate alarms
 8. When not to activate an alarm
 9. Mentally review as often as possible the actions you must perform if confronted with an emergency. The plan should become "second nature" to you.

Opening and Closing Procedures

- Two employees should open and close the business.
- Before opening the business, one employee should check outside areas for possible break-ins. Also look to see that there are no suspicious persons hanging around. Garbage dumpsters are prime places where robbers hide, awaiting your arrival. Also note suspicious vehicles.
- When closing, check all areas inside for possible persons hiding in the business.
- Keep a spare key in a prearranged room, in case an employee is locked inside after a robbery. Keep a phone hidden for such an emergency.
- Do not admit customers after store hours.
- Keep the telephone number of your police department near the phone.
- Be aware that sometimes merchants are followed back to their businesses or to their homes by robbers. Certain safety precautions should be followed regarding vehicles and home safety. Do not always travel the same routes to and from work. Be observant and check often to see if you are followed.
- Know where police stations and fire stations are in your area. These locations are places of safety should you suspect that you are being followed.

- Write down the license plate number of any suspicious vehicles. It is better to throw it away because you don't need it, than to wish you had it.

Business Robbery Tips / During the Robbery

REMAIN CALM. DO NOT RESIST

- Do not try to be a hero. Take no action that would jeopardize your own safety. Remember, if another employee suddenly walks into the middle of a robbery in progress and startles the robber, it could lead to violence. Discuss this problem situation with your employees and develop a policy and procedure for handling situations like this, based on good common sense and the sound and prudent judgement of your employees.
- Follow the robber's directions, but do not volunteer more than he asks for.
- Advise the robber of any unusual moves you must make. Assure him you will cooperate.
- If the robber used a hold-up note, try to retain it, and handle it as little as possible.
- If possible, activate the alarm only if you can do so safely without detection.
- Attempt to alert other employees by use of prearranged signals, but only if safe to do so.
- **MAKE MENTAL NOTES** -- Make a mental note of the robber's race, age, height sex, clothing, complexion, color of hair and eyes, etc. Note anything unusual about the robber, such as scars or tattoos.
- Note the number of accomplices and how they left the premises, direction of travel, type and color of the car and the license number.
- Note type, size and color of the weapon.
- Watch where the robber puts his or her hands or whether he or she touches anything. Fingerprints might be left behind.
- Handle cash carefully. Avoid making your business a tempting target for robbers. Keep the amount of cash in registers low. Remove and place all large bills in your "money" safe as soon as possible. If a customer tries to pay with a large bill, politely ask if he or she has a smaller one. Explain that you keep very little cash on hand.
- Use only one register at night. Leave other registers empty and open. Tilt the register drawer to show there is no money in it.
- Leave blinds and drapes open when your business is closed. This allows police officers to visually inspect the inside of your business. It also makes it more difficult for criminals to conceal themselves and their criminal activities.
- If your business is robbed put your safety first. Don't resist an armed robber. Your personal safety is more important than money or merchandise.
- Don't talk except to answer the robber's questions.
- Don't stare directly at the robber.
- Don't make any sudden moves and keep your hands in sight at all times, if the robber thinks you're reaching for a weapon or alarm button your actions and furtive movements may lead the robber to violence.
- Don't chase or follow the robber out of your place of business.
- Leave the job of catching the robber to the police.

After the Robbery

- Call the police immediately after the robbery. The person who calls the police should be able to stay on the phone if the dispatcher requests that he do so.
- Lock all doors and ask all witnesses to remain until the officers arrive. If a witness must leave, obtain his or her name, address and telephone number.
- All witnesses should write down a description of all the suspects. Do not discuss the robbery or compare notes about the robber's appearance with anyone.
- Protect the crime scene. Do not touch anything.
- If you were given a note by the robber, handle it carefully. Hold it by the edges so that any fingerprints that may be on the paper will not be smeared. Put it in a safe place and keep it for the police. This is an important piece of evidence.
- Actively participate in all training sessions offered to become thoroughly familiar with company policies and procedures.
- Have a plan.
- Mentally review as often as possible the actions you take if confronted with an emergency so that it becomes "second nature" to you.

Physical Deterrents

- Always keep the inside of your business well lighted, especially the entrances and exits.
- The cash register should be visible from outside the store. A clear view to the register from the street or parking lot assists police officers to see inside as they patrol the area. If the windows are blocked they cannot see in.
- Mark the edge of the main doorway with measuring tape. This will help in obtaining a more accurate height of the robber.
- Keep cash at a minimum, and post notices in the doorway of this fact.
- Periodically test video surveillance equipment to verify it is in proper working order.
- Consider the installation of video cameras or alarm systems.
- Try to greet customers as they enter your business. Look them in the eye, and ask them if they need help. Your attention can discourage a robber.

Bank Deposit Procedures

- Do not advertise that you are carrying the bank deposit.
- Avoid wearing name tags or clothing advertising your business when you are carrying the deposit.
- Make deposits during the daylight hours.
- Go directly to the bank. Do not make other stops along the way. Do not take the same route to the bank each time you go and do not go at the same time each day.
- Two employees should make the deposit.
- Never leave a deposit unattended in the vehicle.
- Keep doors of the vehicle locked when carrying deposits.
- Be alert to any vehicle that may be following you to the bank.
- Conceal the cash when transferring it from the vehicle to the bank. Don't carry a money bag in view of anyone.
- If you go to the bank and pick up cash, then follow these precautions for your return to your business.