

The chances of you or a member of your family becoming a victim of personal crime are very low. But everyone should take some simple precautions.

In pubs and clubs

- When out with friends, keep an eye on each other
- Don't accept drinks from people you don't know
- Never leave your drink unattended
- If your drink looks or tastes odd, don't drink it. If you feel unusually ill, seek help from a friend or a member of staff.

Protect your personal possessions

- Don't leave your bag unattended (for instance in a shopping trolley, or on a cafe table while getting food) even for a moment - thieves can be very quick
- Watch out for people approaching you when sat at a table (at a coffee shop for instance). A common technique is to ask for directions and use the cover of a map or newspaper to take your valuables from the table
- Keep your bag zipped up, so thieves can't see what is in there
Consider attaching bells to your purse or phone (so it makes a noise when it is removed) or attaching them to your bag with a strap (so they are harder to remove)
- Wear your bag across your chest so that it can't be pulled from your shoulder.

On foot

- Cover up jewellery, mobile phones, personal music players and keys
- Avoid walking home alone after an evening out. Walk with friends or take a taxi (from a reputable firm)
- If you have to walk, avoid short cuts in lonely areas. Keep to well-lit, busy streets
- Always walk facing oncoming traffic so a car cannot pull up behind you
- If you regularly go walking or jogging, vary your route
- Avoid using a personal music player or mobile phone while walking or jogging. They can distract you from your surroundings
- If you think you're being followed, walk to the busiest place you can find or knock on a door. Then call the police
- Never hitchhike
- Consider carrying a personal attack alarm
- When approaching your car or home, have your keys ready so you can enter without delay
- If you are attacked, shout for help as loudly as you can or shout for someone to contact the police. Use your personal attack alarm. Try to get to a safe place and call the police
- If someone attempts to take something from you, consider letting them have it rather than risk being hurt
- Consider taking self-defense classes.

Travelling by taxi

- Avoid taxi drivers touting for business
- Keep the number of a reputable taxi firm with you
- Only pre-book a taxi from a reputable firm. When it arrives, check that it is from the correct company. If not, don't get in
- Sit behind the driver and stay aware
- If you feel uneasy, ask to be let out in a busy, well-lit area
- If in doubt, don't get in.

On buses and trains

- Always plan your journey and try not to travel alone
- While waiting for a bus or train, stand in a well-lit place near other people
- Sit near the driver or other people. Avoid empty carriages or empty top decks
- Check where the emergency chain is located
- If you are being pestered, tell the guard or driver
- Keep your fare money or ticket at hand so you can avoid getting your purse or wallet out in public
- Keep your belongings close by at all times.

In your car

- Make sure your car is roadworthy and has enough fuel for your journey
- Keep a torch in your car
- Always lock the car while you are inside it
- Keep valuables out of sight
- Park in well-lit, busy areas and consider the safest route back to where you have parked
- If possible, park in police approved car parks displaying the 'ParkMark' logo
- Check the interior of your car before getting in – particularly the back seat
- If you are being followed do not stop and get out of the car. Lock the doors and drive to a busy place. Then stop the car, sound the horn to attract attention and use your mobile phone to call for help
- Never give a lift to a stranger