

# Personal Safety Tips

By  
Captain Ed Bailey

## Making a Habit of Personal Safety

Whether you are at home, in your car or at work, you may be a potential target for crime. Because of this, personal safety can never be taken for granted.

First Alert Professional Security Systems has recently produced a booklet called "**How to Make A Habit of Personal Safety**". Developed with the National Crime Prevention Council, this brochure provides over 150 tips designed to ensure the personal safety of your family. After you read through the items, try to integrate the recommendations into your daily routine.

The pamphlet provides information on several topics including burglary prevention, car theft and street sense. What follows are some valuable excerpts.

## Burglary Prevention

### ❖ Trim shrubs back to avoid giving burglars cover.

Trim tree branches so that there's no access to upper windows and so that lower branches don't offer hiding places.

### ❖ Keep garages and sheds closed and locked at all times.

They offer excellent cover for a burglar to break into the house.

### ❖ When advertising valuable items for sale, give only your phone number, not your street address.

### ❖ Do not leave doors unlocked while working in the yard.

A burglar can gain easy access to your home and be in and out in just a couple of minutes. Surprising a burglar upon reentering could result in violence. If you have an alarm system, keep it armed while you are in the yard.

- ❖ **Consider installing an electronic security system to monitor for burglary, fire and personal emergency.**
- ❖ **Call Independence Police Community Projects Unit at (859) 356-2697 or e-mail us at [communityprojects@cityofindependence.org](mailto:communityprojects@cityofindependence.org) to arrange for a free security evaluation of your home, business, church, or school.**

## **Car Theft**

- ❖ **If you park in a commercial garage or lot, always leave just the ignition key with the attendant.**  
Make sure no identifying information is attached. Do the same when you take your car in for repairs.
- ❖ **Do not park near a van, which can block an assault from the view of others.**  
A van can also hide criminals inside who can pull you into the vehicle.
- ❖ **Do not leave a woman's jacket or other women's clothing readily visible in the car.**  
This could tell a criminal that a woman is likely to be the driver. Consider leaving something visible, like an auto magazine that would probably be seen as masculine.
- ❖ **From 20 to 30 feet away from your car, look underneath it.**  
As you prepare to enter, look in the back seat and to the side. Some power doors unlock all locks simultaneously, so lock doors immediately.
- ❖ **If you are grabbed by an assailant, toss the keys as far as you can.**  
This way, the assailant will typically go for the keys and not force you into the car.

## **Street Smarts**

- ❖ **Know the neighborhoods where you live and work.**  
Check locations of police and fire stations, public telephones, hospitals, restaurants, gas stations or stores that are open late.
- ❖ **Use automated teller machines in the daylight.**  
Have your card ready to use.
- ❖ **Don't wear headphones while walking or jogging.**
- ❖ **If you think someone is following you when you are in your car, don't head home.**  
Drive to the nearest police or fire station or open business to get help.

Submitted by Captain Ed Bailey