

Personal Safety



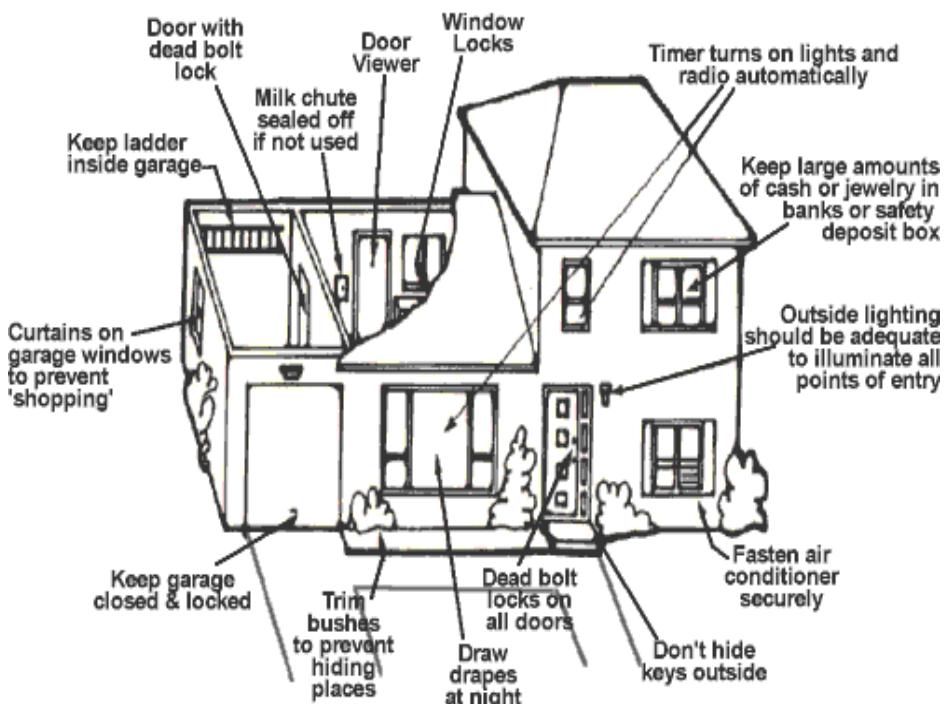
**Neighbourhood
WATCH
London**

519 661 4533

www.neighbourhoodwatchlondon.ca

Personal Security
IN YOUR HOME

Your home is your castle - Protect it!



**This booklet is intended to provide useful and timely personal safety information to our Neighbourhood Watch members and its affiliates. Neighbourhood Watch London provides this booklet for information purposes only. This booklet and all of the information it contains is provided strictly "as is" and without warranty of any kind, either expressed or implied.

Personal Security

IN YOUR HOME

- Have lights at all entrances.
- Have a wide-angle door viewer on all exterior doors.
- Have good locks on all doors and windows – and use them.
- Do not use your full name on your mailbox, in the telephone directory, or on your answering machine.
- Do not leave a schedule of your times away from home on your answering machine or laying around in plain view.
- Know which of your neighbours you can trust and depend upon in an emergency.
- Check who is at the door before opening it, and do not open the door to an unexpected visitor.
- Don't hide extra keys in easily accessible places. Criminals will find them.
- Ask for photo identification of all repair persons. If you are suspicious, call to verify employment.
- Never give personal information to telephone solicitors.
- Do not let strangers into your home or apartment to use the telephone. Offer to make the call for them.
- Use security bars for added security on exterior sliding doors.

Personal Security

ON PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION:

- Beware of overheard conversations.
- Don't tell anyone on a bus or subway where you are going.
- Stay awake and alert.
- Have exact change ready.
- Sit as close to the driver as possible.
- If you sense someone is following you when you get off, walk toward other people or to an open business.



TIPS FOR WHEN YOU ARE WALKING OR JOGGING:

- Always be familiar with the area. Vary the times and routes of your exercise so you do not create patterns of behavior.
- Carry proper ID and information (health insurance ID) on you and who to contact in case of an emergency.
- Avoid walking or jogging in the dark or in high crime/drug abuse areas.
- Jog or walk with a friend or a dog as this makes you a much less desirable target.
- Advise someone close to you that you are going to take a walk/jog and when they should expect you back. If you don't come back within that time have them come looking for you.

Personal Security

ON THE STREET



- Never hitchhike! It's not worth the risk!
- Be very careful using outside ATMs at night or in unfamiliar surroundings.
- When walking, walk in the middle of the sidewalk and walk facing oncoming traffic.
- Try not to overload yourself with packages or other items. Keep your hands as free as possible.
- Do not wear music headphones while walking or jogging, as this reduces your awareness of your surroundings.
- Do not read while walking or standing on a sidewalk.
- If you carry a purse, carry it close to your body, preferably in front. Carry no more money or credit cards than you absolutely need.
- If you wear a purse with a shoulder strap, be prepared to let it go if snatched. Otherwise you could be assaulted or knocked down and be injured.
- For Men: carry a second wallet containing a few dollar bills and old expired credit cards. If confronted at knife or gunpoint, keep calm and give the suspect the second wallet. Concentrate on getting a good physical description to help police in the investigation and making the arrest.

Personal Security

IN YOUR CAR:

- Keep your car in good working order and the gas tank at least half full.
- When you approach your parked vehicle, visually check the area around, under, and inside the vehicle for any suspicious persons or activity. If you observe anything suspicious walk to where there are other people and call the police.
- Always park in visible, well-lighted areas.
- If you drive a car, attempt to avoid parking next to a larger pickup truck or van. These are easy places for criminals to hide behind.
- Do not pick up hitchhikers!
- Have your keys ready when approaching your vehicle to reduce the time needed to enter. Keys can also be used as a good self-defence weapon.
- When operating your vehicle, keep the doors locked and the windows rolled up.
- Any valuables in your car should be placed in the trunk or otherwise kept out of sight.
- Drive with all the doors locked. If unlocked, a criminal can simply run to your car from the sidewalk, open the door, and get in.
- 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.



Personal Security

- If someone approaches your vehicle and attempts to enter, blow your horn to attract attention and drive away.
- Many people consider a cellular telephone to be a good investment in safety. Remember that you should not use it whilst driving – unless in an emergency.
- Do not open your window if someone approaches your vehicle to ask for directions, the time, etc.
- Keep the door locked.
- Never leave house keys attached to car keys at service stations, parking facilities, or at a valet, as these could be copied prior to your return.
- Do not stop for a stranded motorist. Instead, go to the nearest telephone booth and call the police for assistance.
- If you have a flat tire, drive on it until you reach a safe, well-lighted and well-traveled area.
- If your vehicle becomes disabled and help is not immediately available, raise the hood of the vehicle (if you can do so safely), attach a handkerchief to the door handle, and then stay in the vehicle with the doors locked and the windows up. Activate your hazard or parking lights. If someone stops to assist you, ask them through the closed window to call the police.
- If you are involved in a minor accident under suspicious circumstances, stay in your vehicle with the doors locked and the windows up and await the police. If you believe you are in possible danger, write down the license plate of the other vehicle involved in the accident and drive to a safe location to report the accident to the police immediately.

Personal Security

- If you are being followed, don't drive home. Go to the nearest police or fire station and honk your horn. Or drive to an open gas station or other business where you can safely call the police.
- Don't leave your car unless you are certain you can get inside the building safely.
- If you are driving somewhere you are not familiar with, plan your route and check a map before you start.
- Carry in your car – a flashlight, fix-a-flat, maps, comfortable warm clothing, a portable fire extinguisher, first aid kit, empty gas can, white cloth to tie to door handle or antenna to signal distress, and a cellular phone.
- If you have car trouble and are in need of a tow service, check the tow truck's business license and/or driver's I.D. and certification to ensure that it is a reputable company. It is wise to contact the tow company prior to the rendering of any services. In Ontario, the Automobile Club (CAA) can provide you with a list of reputable companies and service centers.

IN A BUILDING:

- Avoid isolated corridors or hallways.
- Be extra careful in stairwells and isolated or poorly lit restrooms.
- Avoid entering an elevator, if it is occupied by only one other person who is a stranger.
- In an elevator, stand near the controls and locate the emergency button.
- If you are assaulted while in an elevator, hit the emergency or alarm button and press as many floor buttons as possible.

HOW TO PREVENT PURSE SNATCHING:

- Hold your purse tightly and close to your body. Keep the flap or opening near your body. Purses with zippers or snaps are less appealing to a thief and should be used when you are in public places.
- Spread your money and valuables out. Don't keep all your money, valuables, credit cards, etc. in your purse. Leave some at home or hide them in a pocket or coat.
- Carry your purse/briefcase towards the building side of the sidewalk and not the street side.
- Smaller purses without carrying straps should be tightly cradled in one's arm, as a football player carries a football.
- If your purse has carrying straps, it should be carried over the shoulder (between the arm and side of neck).
- Do not carry such purse straps across the body or over your head as you could be severely injured if the thief forcibly yanks the purse away from you.
- If confronted by a purse snatcher, DO NOT RESIST Let them have the purse. Don't fight them or get tangled up with the purse or do anything that would cause them to hurt you.
- Do not run after the purse snatcher. Violence may ensue should you put up a fight. Your purse is NOT worth losing your life over.



Personal Security

SAFETY TIPS WHEN TRAVELLING

- Don't answer the door in a hotel or motel room without verifying who it is. If a person claims to be an employee, call the front desk and ask if someone from their staff is supposed to have access to your room and for what purpose.
- When returning to your hotel or motel late in the evening, use the main entrance of the hotel. Be observant and look around before entering parking lots.
- Close the door securely whenever you are in your room and use all of the locking devices provided.
- Do not draw attention to yourself by displaying large amounts of cash or expensive jewelry.
- Don't needlessly display guest room keys/swipe cards in public or carelessly leave them on restaurant tables, at the swimming pool, or other places where they can be easily stolen.
- Don't invite strangers into your room.
- Place all valuables in the hotel or motel's safe deposit box.
- Do not leave valuables in your car.
- Check to see that any sliding glass doors or windows and any connecting room doors are locked.



Personal Security

HOW TO BE ATM STREETWISE:

- According to statistics, the most dangerous hours for ATM crime are from 7:00 p.m. until midnight, when approximately 49 percent of ATM-related crimes occurred. The most common crimes against ATM customers were robbery after withdrawal of funds, forced withdrawal, and robbery of customers' other personal property such as jewelry and wallets.

Help protect yourself at ATMs. . .

- Familiarize yourself with the machine before you use it so you can complete your transaction quickly.
- Never approach an ATM if the lights at the site are not operating.
- Never let others observe you punch in your personal identification number (PIN) at the ATM use your body to shield the keyboard.
- Never count your money at the ATM or leave with your wallet or cash exposed
- Don't choose an obvious PIN such as your birth date or Social Security number. Memorize your PIN never write it down or give it to anyone.. .
- Lock the right-hand door of your car at drive-up ATMs . . . so nobody can climb in while you're busy using the machine.
- Never approach an ATM if you see suspicious people near the machine or if you have any doubts, fears, or concerns for your safety.



Personal Security

CREDIT CARD SAFETY PRECAUTIONS:

- Credit cardholders often aren't as careful as they should be — and the fraudulent use of credit cards isn't limited to the loss or theft of actual credit cards.
- The best advice for protecting credit card accounts: Never give the account number over the telephone, unless you're confident you're dealing with a reputable company.
- Don't be fooled by scams where a con artist wants to verify your credit card number because you've won a prize.
- Before leaving home, take all credit cards you are not going to use out of your wallet and store them in a safe place.
- Never take your eyes off your card when you're making a purchase. Make certain that no extra imprints of your card are made to other charge slips.
- Destroy all the carbons so no one can obtain your account number. It's also a wise idea to keep your receipts and check them against the monthly billing statement.
- In the event your card is lost or stolen, immediately notify the credit card company. Most issuing banks or companies can be reached 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The majority of fraudulent charges are made within 48 hours of the loss.
- Credit card thieves sometimes even call the victim; inform that person that their credit card has been found



Personal Security

and that it is being returned. This ploy gives the thief time to go on a charging spree because the card holder never calls to cancel the card.

IDENTIFICATION THEFT:

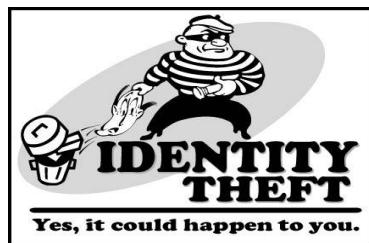
What can I do to protect my identity?

- Shred or tear up any papers/correspondence containing your personal information before you throw it away. Also be sure to shred expired credit/debit cards and any pre-approved or promotional card applications that you may receive in the mail.
- Do not request that highly sensitive personal information, such as Social Insurance number, be printed on checks or other documents.
- Make a list of your credit card numbers, driver's license number, etc. and the telephone numbers to call if they are lost or stolen. Be sure to maintain the list in a safe place within your home or in a safe deposit box.
- Check your account statements regularly; be alert when reviewing your statements to any unrecognized transactions. Also be aware of any missed or untimely delivery of statements or other expected correspondence.
- Remember, when creating a password or PIN, choose passwords that are easy to remember, but hard for others to guess. **Do not use** names (i.e., your name, your spouse, a child's, nor a pet's name), birth dates, or last four digits of your Social Security number or other data that can be associated with you. Additionally, memorize your passwords, and don't record them on anything in your wallet.
- Be aware of people around you when using Automated Teller Machines or making telephone calls. Do not

Personal Security

share your password/PIN with anyone. If it is revealed change it immediately and try to use different passwords/PINs on your various accounts and services.

- Read privacy policies on the Web sites that you visit and be careful when filling out forms on the Internet, especially when they request your personal information.
- Remember to discuss with your children and family members the risks of providing personal information over the Internet or the telephone.
- To protect information on your home computer, use current anti-virus software and consider installation of a personal firewall.



WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I SUSPECT THAT MY IDENTIY HAS BEEN STOLEN?

Take ***immediate action*** to minimize damage. Some suggestions include:

- File a police report where the theft occurred. Be sure to get the report number and a copy of the report in case you need to provide proof of the crime later.
- Notify your financial institution(s) if you suspect you are a victim of identity theft.
- Report stolen checks and stop payment on them immediately.
- Close all credit accounts which have been fraudulently accessed or opened, and ask that old accounts be processed as "account closed at consumer's request."

Personal Security

WORKPLACE SAFETY TIPS:

- Keep your purse, wallet, or other valuable items with you at all times or locked in a drawer or closet.
- Check the identification of any strangers who ask for proprietary information or any delivery or repair persons who want to enter an area restricted to employees.
- Be discreet. Don't advertise your social life or vacation plans, or those of your fellow employees, to strangers visiting your place of work.
- Park in well-lit and well-traveled areas.
- If you must work late or at odd hours, walk with a group or ask another employee or security guard to escort you to your car.
- If you notice any suspicious persons or vehicles, notify security personnel. Trust your instincts and never hesitate to report anything that makes you feel uneasy.
- What if you become a victim? Stay calm, try not to panic or show any signs of anger or confusion. Try to compose an accurate description of the assailant to help police. Report all crimes to the police immediately.



Personal Security

MAKE YOUR CAR HARD TO STEAL:

- Car theft may be increasing in many cities across the country, but there are precautions you can take to avoid the hassles associated with having your car disappear:
- Use a security system.
- Never leave your keys in an unattended car, even for a moment.
- Have any car identification numbers removed from your keys. A thief can trace the number and have duplicate keys made.
- Never attach an identification tag to your keys.
- Don't leave your car in an unattended lot for extended periods, and park in a well-lighted area.
- To keep a thief from towing your car, avoid parking on street corners and sharply turn the wheels toward the curb.
- Before leaving home lock all valuables in the trunk.
- Don't leave the license and registration in the car when it is unoccupied.
- Be sure that the vehicle identification number has been etched on the windshield, as well as on the frame of the car. This will aid in its recovery if it is stolen.



“Steering wheel locking device”

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IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS:

| | |
|--|----------------|
| Emergency (Police, Fire, Ambulance) | 9 1 1 |
| Police non emergency | 519-661-5670 |
| Community Oriented Response (COR) | 519-661-5983 |
| Poison Control Centre | 1-800-268-9017 |
| Crime Stoppers | 519-661-8477 |
| Neighbourhood Watch London | 519-661-4533 |
| Block Parents | 519-661-5855 |
| London Distress Centre | 519-667-6711 |
| Animal Control | 519-685-1330 |
| Garbage (Complaints/Inquiries/Calendars) | 519-661-4585 |
| Blue Box Hot Line | 519-649-6262 |
| Parking Enforcement | 519-661-4537 |
| Mayor's Office Main Phone | 519-661-4920 |
| Councilor's Office Main Phone | 519-661-5095 |
| Middlesex-London Health Unit | 519-663-5317 |
| Street Light and Traffic Signal outages | 519-661-2641 |
| Seniors Helpline | 519-667-6600 |

**Neighbourhood WATCH London
652 Elizabeth St
London, ON
N5Y 6L3**

519 661 4533

www.neighbourhoodwatchlondon.ca

Email: nwl@london.ca