

- Always know how to get where you are going before you leave.
- Don't leave packages or other tempting articles in view in a locked car. Lock them in the trunk.
- Never, never pick up hitchhikers.
- If you have car problems, be especially wary of strangers who offer help. Stay in the car and ask them to call a service truck and the police.
- Keep your gas tank at least half full at all times.

Don't be flimflammed by a con artist

Con artists prey on older people who worry about insurance, investments, and maintaining their homes. Regardless of how nice and polite someone may seem, be suspicious of any proposal that sounds too good to be true, has to be kept secret, or requires immediate cash. Call the Better Business Bureau or the police.



Be especially wary of:

- "Get rich quick" opportunities or schemes for which you have to put up good-faith money;
- Bargains on home repairs or improvements;
- Investments that promise unusually high returns;
- Someone claiming you owe money for an item ordered by a deceased relative;
- Work-at-home schemes, door-to-door sales, telephone sales, supplemental health insurance, miracle cures, glasses and hearing aids at bargain prices from unknown sources, unfamiliar charities.

Let's look at some facts:

- Compared to other age groups, people 65 and over have the **lowest** rates for most types of crime, with a few exceptions such as purse snatching.

- We all greatly fear crimes of violence, but these are the ones that happen least often.
- Most murders and assaults are committed by relatives or friends, not by strangers.

Statistics aside, when older people are victimized—even by a minor crime—effects can be physically, emotionally, and financially devastating.

If you are the victim of a crime, help is just a phone call away.

Report all crime, no matter how minor or even embarrassing, to the police by calling **911**. They can link you up with victim service agencies, the district attorney's office, and other agencies whose staff are there to help you.



English: Attention. If you want help translating this information, call 612-673-3737
 Spanish: Atención. Si desea recibir asistencia gratuita para traducir esta información, llame 612-673-2700
 Somali: Ogow. Haddii aad dooneyso in lagaa kaalmeeyo tarjamadda macluumaadkani oo lacag la' aan wac 612-673-3500
 Hmong: Ceeb toom. Yog koj xav tau kev pab txhais cov xov no rau koj dawb, hu 612-673-2800
 Sign Language: TTY 612-673-2626
 If you need this material in an alternative format, please contact the Minneapolis Police Department at 612-673-2912.

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COMMON SENSE & CRIME PREVENTION FOR SENIOR CITIZENS

- Crime prevention is everybody's business. It's not just a job for the police.
- Common-sense measures—like locking a door, joining Neighborhood Watch, going to the bank with a friend—can help prevent crime.
- Many older men and women greatly fear crime even though, statistically, their risk of being victimized is low.

PREVENTION POWER

The following tips help you reduce your risk of being a crime victim. The common-sense actions also empower you by building confidence in your ability to protect yourself and be independent.

Neighbors — the front-line defense

- Work out a buddy system with a neighbor. Check on each other every day.
- Let neighbors know when you go on a trip so they can watch out for your house or apartment. Return the favor when they go away.
- Join a neighborhood watch group, or call CCP/SAFE (612-673-3015) to help organize one.
- Volunteer for the McGruff House program, which provides a safe haven for neighborhood children in emergencies.

At home

- Lock up! Get good locks and use them. Exterior doors—deadbolt lock. Sliding doors—special lock or broom handle in door track. Windows—

good lock or pins for all accessible windows.

- Light up! Make sure all porches, entrances, and yard are well-lighted. Use timers when you are away or coming home after dark.
- Use a wide-angle peephole (installed at your height) to identify people who come to the front door.
- Ask all service and sales people for identification before you let them into your home. Don't hesitate to call employers for verification.
- Be sensible about keys. Don't put an address tag on your key ring, and don't hide an extra key under a doormat or flower pot.
- Hang up immediately on harassing or obscene phone calls. If the caller persists, call police and the phone company.
- For an extra measure of protection: Don't keep large amounts of cash at home.
- Use Direct Deposit for Social Security or pension checks.
- Call 911 if you need the police, fire, or paramedics.
- Mark valuable property like televisions, VCRs, cameras with an Operation Identification number.

Call 612-673-2749 to have a number assigned to you. Make a photographic inventory of jewelry and antiques. Also, make a list for insurance purposes with descriptions, makes, and serial numbers.

- Have a specially trained police officer assess the security of your home. Call CCP/SAFE at 612-673-3015 to request a Home Security Check.
- Learn more about ways to prevent burglary at one of Community Crime Prevention/SAFE's Home Security Demonstrations. Call CCP/SAFE at 612-673-3015 for information.

If you suspect a burglar has broken into your home, don't go in. Go to a neighbors and call the **911**.

Out and about

- Stay alert and tuned into your surroundings. Don't daydream.
- Go out with a friend whenever possible.
- Try to walk in a confident, relaxed manner.
- Trust your instincts. If you feel uncomfortable in a place or situation, leave.
- Try carrying a small change purse with only the money or credit cards that you need, instead of a large hand-

bag with straps. Keep your wallet in an inside jacket or front pants pocket.

- Don't burden yourself with packages, and don't wear shoes or clothing that restrict your movements.
- Walk on well-lighted, busy streets. Stay away from vacant lots, alleys, or construction sites.
- Avoid displaying large amounts of cash or other tempting targets, such as expensive jewelry.
- If someone grabs your purse or packages, try to keep your balance, get away, and shout for help.

On the bus

- Use busy, well-lighted stops.
- Don't fall asleep. Stay alert!
- Watch who gets on or off the bus with you. If you feel uneasy, walk directly to a place where there are other people, or sit near the driver.

When driving

- Always lock your car doors. Never leave keys in the ignition when you leave the car, even for a few minutes.
- When you drive, keep the doors locked and windows up. Park in well-lighted, busy areas.