

Security While Traveling



Presented by Community Crime Prevention/SAFE

Preparing Yourself For The Trip

We have prepared the following information for your financial and personal security while traveling.

- F ***Make a record of your passport, credit card, and traveler's check numbers as well as plane, train, or bus ticket numbers.*** An easy way to do this is to photocopy them all together.
- F ***Before traveling to an unfamiliar place, write to its local chamber of commerce for information and maps of the city.*** Check with your local travel agent for recommendations about where to stay, parts of the city to avoid, etc.
- F ***Take enough medicine for several days if you are diabetic or need any kind of medication.*** Wear a "Medic Alert" chain or bracelet at all times if you have special medical problems. Drug stores and hospitals can provide information about where to order them.
- F ***Clean out your wallet and/or purse.*** Don't take anything (like credit cards or papers) you won't need.
- F ***Use traveler's checks as much as possible.*** Keep the slip with the serial numbers of the checks apart from the checks themselves either on your person or in your carry-on baggage. Keep a similar list of serial numbers of any personal checks you are carrying, along with your passport and credit card numbers.
- F ***Use credit cards when you travel.*** Major credit cards are accepted in cities throughout the world. Some credit card companies will let you cash personal checks with your card. This allows you to reduce the amount of cash and travelers checks you bring with you. When using a credit card, make sure the card returned by the clerk after your purchase is your card and not a stolen one.
- F ***Know the remaining credit limits on all credit cards.*** (Individuals have been arrested in some countries for exceeding their limits.)
- F ***Insure credit cards that you carry on trips.***



- F *Divide your money, checks, and credit cards among wallets, purses, and pockets so that if you experience a theft or robbery, all is not lost.*
- F *Keep small cash in an accessible place for use during actual travel in public places.*
- F *Sew velcro strips at the top of the pocket where you carry your wallet to make it more difficult for pickpockets.* The same thing can be done with a purse that doesn't have a zipper or good latch.
- F *Men can also discourage pickpockets by carrying their wallets in their front pants pocket.*

Crime Prevention Tips While Traveling

Whether you are traveling on business or on vacation, crime prevention should be incorporated into your trip. You should actually develop a greater awareness while in unfamiliar territory. Don't let your vacation or business trip be ruined by becoming another crime statistic. The following guidelines will help you to have a safe and enjoyable trip!

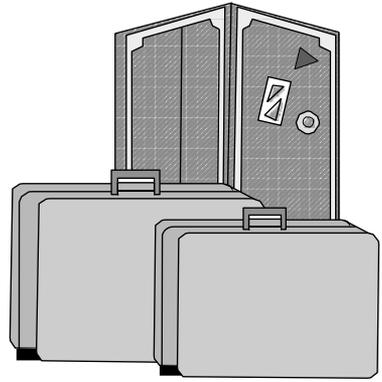
If You are Driving . . .

- F Prior to any long-distance motor vehicle trips, have your vehicle serviced by a reputable mechanic.
- F Try to load your vehicle in the attached garage to avoid advertising to passersby that you are leaving. Never pack your car, camper, or trailer the night before if it must be left in the driveway. It is tempting to thieves and an advertisement that you are going to be away.
- F Always be aware of your surroundings.
- F Always check the interior of your vehicle before entering.
- F Do not stop and assist a stranded motorist. Go to the nearest phone booth and call for help.
- F Never let your gas tank get below one-fourth full.
- F Use well-traveled roads; avoid shortcuts.
- F Keep your doors locked and windows up at all times.
- F Do not pick up hitchhikers.
- F Never advertise your plans for strangers. If you think you are being followed, drive to the nearest public-area telephone and call the police.
- F Always park in well-lighted areas.
- F Always carry your purse or wallet with you.
- F Keep your valuables out of sight, preferably locked in the trunk.

- F Engrave your car stereo, CD player, car phone, and other removable items with your OPID number.
- F Avoid late night driving.
- F If lost, stop at a well-lighted service station for directions.
- F Use a locking gas cap on your vehicle.
- F Avoid consulting maps in public because it draws attention to the fact that you're unfamiliar with the area.
- F Keep an emergency road kit that includes a good flashlight and batteries.
- F When you park, do not leave anything of value visible in the car. Put everything in the trunk and take the trunk key with you. (This is applicable wherever you go, even at home.)
- F If you leave the car with an attendant, leave only the ignition key and note the odometer reading on your claim check as the attendant watches you. Always take the claim check with you.
- F Check the area before getting out. If anything looks suspicious, drive away and find another parking place.



If Traveling by Plane . . .



Safeguarding your luggage

- F Use hard-construction suitcases so they can't be cut open.
- F Suitcases should have solid, well-secured handles and good locks.
- F Do not pack valuables, especially fragile items. Baggage marked "fragile" is an invitation to theft.
- F If you must take valuables, pack your valuables in a carry-on bag that you keep with you at all times.
- F Never leave your luggage unattended; keep it in sight and within reach at all times.
- F Use only your initials and your business address on your luggage tags. Don't include your company name or use your business card. Another security measure is to use baggage tags that must be unsnapped to be read.
- F Include identification inside the luggage too, in case outside tags are lost.
- F Carry-on luggage should include:
 - names and phone numbers of people to contact in an emergency;
 - a valid copy of your birth certificate if you are traveling overseas and need to replace your passport; and
 - the policy number card of your health insurance agency.
- F Remove all old airline destination tags that might confuse baggage handlers.

- F Keep a list of the contents of your luggage separate from your luggage and carry-on items. This list could help identify your bags if the need arises.
- F Do not pack anything with a battery in it, such as an electric toothbrush, since if it is accidentally turned on during luggage handling, security personnel may treat it as a possible bomb.
- F If you are packing hobby work that involves scissors or pocket knife, put it in the check-in luggage so it won't be confiscated from your carry-on luggage.
- F Avoid carrying liquids in either carry-on or check-in luggage. Inside carry-on luggage, it may be probed to ensure it is not a flammable liquid. Inside check-in luggage, it may be broken during handling.
- F If you will be carrying a gun, check with the state of your destination to ensure it is legal to carry/possess them. If it is, you must pack it unloaded in your check-in luggage and you must declare it when you check your bags. The clerk will enclose a tag inside the suitcase and will notify the airplane crew of its presence. You cannot transport ammunition of any kind aboard the plane.
- F Don't overload your luggage or it may pop open.
- F For a modest sum you can join one of the passengers' clubs offered by the airlines. Card-holders can use a hostess-serviced hospitality lounge. It is a restricted, special access room that provides security for you and your belongings.
- F If you must leave your baggage unattended momentarily while waiting for your cab or ride, when you go to the restroom, etc., carry a bicycle chain and padlock to run through the handles of your baggage, then chain it to a post, bench, or plumbing under a sink in the restroom.
- F When standing in a line or crowd in the airport, if there is an argument or commotion in the area, immediately check your luggage. This could be a ploy to distract you.
- F You may experience long security delays as you pass through customs and immigration in some foreign cities.

At The Airport

Try to get a ride to the airport. If you cannot, you may find parking off the airport premises that is cheaper and has a full-time security guard. There are such lots near the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport.



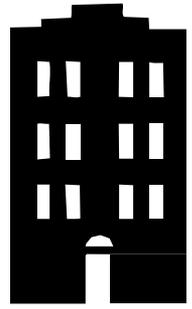
Landing At The Airport

- F When arriving at an airport in another city, check with the Traveler's Aid station for information about where to park, eat, stay, etc. They can also provide information about cabs, directions to your destination, car rentals from rental agencies off airport premises that may be less expensive, and they can help arrange emergency accommodations if you lose your money or baggage. Airport police in U.S. cities can give you information about parts of town to avoid.
- F Don't let anyone solicit you for a cab ride, a tour of the city, a higher exchange rate on foreign currency (you may come away with a fistful of worthless paper), or a hotel.
- F Most major airports have a bank of courtesy phones directly to the major hotels/motels in the area. The clerks who answer these phones can answer your questions about their rates and location and they can also arrange for their free hotel shuttle to pick you up at the airport.

At The Hotel/Motel

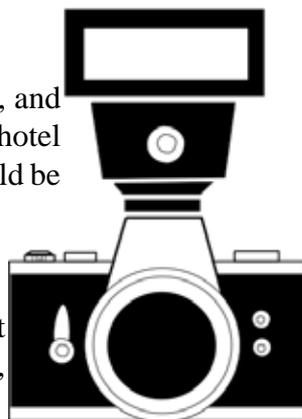
- F Women should register with first initial and last name only, never Mrs., Miss, or Ms. Always leave the idea with the desk clerk that you are expecting someone soon. Ask the clerk not to announce your room number when he summons the bellhop.
- F Be careful in the hotel elevator. Trust your instincts when you see the other occupants. If you're going up, don't board an elevator headed for the basement. If someone does something suspicious on an elevator, stand facing that passenger with your back to the control panel and finger on the emergency button.
- F Inspect the room thoroughly before accepting it. Check the locks and bolts on the doors and windows and on the door between any connecting rooms.

- F Check to see if the building has sprinklers.
- F Keep the room door locked at all times. If possible, wind a coat hanger through the key or key ring as the key is in the lock and hang the hanger on the door to prevent anyone from using a key outside to open the door. There are also special locking devices and alarms available at many locksmith shops that work especially well for hotel/motel security.
- F Prop a chair against the door when you go to bed so an intruder will make noise.
- F When you check in, locate the fire exits nearest your room and throughout the building, and locate the fire alarm pull boxes.
- F Look up the local emergency number and write it down near the phone.
- F When you leave, do not tell the desk clerk and do not leave your keys at the desk. Leave the radio or television on and hang out the “Do Not Disturb” sign if the maid has cleaned your room. Take keys and valuables with you or use the hotel safe.
- F If anyone knocks, make them identify themselves before you open the door. If you didn’t request room service, laundry, bellhop, etc., check with the desk for verification. Use the door viewer as well.
- F Unpack and arrange your belongings so you can tell if anything is missing.
- F Lock your suitcases so they can’t be used to carry your property out of your room.
- F Always take your cash, credit cards, and car keys with you when leaving your room.
- F Never sit in the room with the door propped open. Don’t leave the door open for any length of time, even if you are just going to the ice machine.
- F Be aware of your surroundings. Notify the management of any suspicious persons in the area.
- F Do not give out your room number to strangers.
- F Report any missing items to hotel management and the police.
- F Do not leave jewelry, cameras, or other expensive items lying around your room. Use the hotel safe to store your valuables and extra cash.



When Sightseeing

- F Avoid deserted streets, alleys, parking lots, and areas with unsafe reputations. Ask the hotel clerk if there are any areas in town that should be avoided.
- F Stay alert.
- F Walk on the sidewalk against traffic, and not too close to the street or too close to buildings, doorways, alley openings, etc.
- F Don't let strangers slow you down for handouts, cigarettes, or any other pretext and watch their hands. Keep walking and pull away from any possible body contact or attempts to touch you.
- F If you sense you are being followed, change direction and move to a more populated area.
- F There is safety in numbers. Tours can be taken with a group.
- F Verify the tour agency or guide is reputable.
- F Be wary of strangers who ask a lot of questions about you and your vacation plans.
- F Never carry large amounts of cash. Leave what you don't need in the hotel safe. Separate the larger bills from the smaller ones in order to avoid flashing all your bills in full public view.
- F Stay in public areas. Do not wander off from your tour group.
- F Looking lost will make you an easy target for crime. If you need directions, ask a service station attendant. Do not ask pedestrians for directions.
- F If renting a car, cover the car rental agency's name or logo with a piece of masking tape. A rented car is a good indication that you are a tourist.
- F Travel brochures and maps are a good indication that you are a tourist. When not in use, keep them in the glove compartment.



Transportation In Another City

Cabs

- F The maps you receive from either the Chamber of Commerce or Travelers Aid can help you map out your route from the airport to your destination so the cab driver won't take you on the scenic route.
- F When entering the cab, check for the cab identification number. Most cities require cabs to have special licenses. Write down the number and the name of your driver.
- F Ask the driver in advance how much it will cost to get to your destination.

Buses

- F Never stand in isolated locations. Stay with other people.
- F Stand away from the curb.
- F Sit as close to the driver as possible and choose the aisle seat if possible.
- F Notify the driver immediately if anyone bothers you or even acts suspiciously.
- F When you get off the bus, if you suspect you are being followed go immediately to a well-lighted area where there are people and request police assistance. Then stay there until an officer arrives.
- F Do not accept a ride to your destination from a stranger.

Subways

- F While waiting, stand away from the edge of the platform and near the ticket booth.
- F Be alert.
- F Do not exit at your stop if it is not well-lighted. Stay on until a better stop is reached.
- F If you suspect someone is following you, get off only at a busy stop. Go directly to the ticket booth and ask the cashier to call police.

Trains

- F Be especially security-conscious at the boarding platform and near or in rest rooms and/or food service areas.
- F If anyone bothers you, notify the conductor immediately.

Upon return, if there are signs of a burglary such as a broken window pane or forced door, call 911 immediately. Do not take the chance of confronting a burglar inside.

DO NOT CALL YOUR LOCAL PRECINCT STATION IF YOU NEED A SQUAD CAR TO RESPOND. ALL DISPATCHING OF SQUAD CARS IS DONE THROUGH 911.

1st Precinct (Downtown)	
19 N. 4th St.	673-2655
2nd Precinct (East side)	
1911 Central Ave. NE	673-5702
3rd Precinct (Minnehaha)	
3000 Minnehaha Ave. S.	673-5703
4th Precinct (North side)	
1925 Plymouth Ave. N.	673-5704
5th Precinct (Southwest)	
3101 Nicollet Ave.	673-5705

HAVE A SAFE AND PLEASANT TRIP!



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.