

RISK-REDUCTION TIPS: GENERAL GUIDELINES

These are tips that can provide you with low risk options for safeguarding your life against a predator. Don't look at them as iron-clad rules. If a particular tip conflicts with things you need or want to do, try to find other options to protect yourself in that situation. **Reminder: Risk reduction practices are not sexual assault prevention practices. The victim is never to blame for a crime committed against them. Predators and perpetrators must be held accountable for their own choices and actions.**

ON THE STREET

- **Predators identify targets.**
 - Cross the street if you see anything on your side that makes you nervous.
 - Walk on well-illuminated streets; avoid doorways, shrubbery, dark areas near buildings and other places where an attacker might hide.
 - To get off the street, use public transportation – sit near the driver.
- **Predators use isolation as a weapon.**
 - If possible use the buddy-system: walk with a friend/s.
 - If you have taken a ride in a cab or from a friend, ask the driver to wait until you are safely inside your house before leaving.
 - Avoid deserted laundromats or apartment building laundry rooms.
- **Predators identify vulnerabilities in targets.**
 - Be alert in crowded buses, streets, malls, etc.; pick-pockets work best in these environments.
 - It is safer to carry money or wallets in an inside or front pocket.
 - Be cautious about revealing cash or credit cards.
 - Purses and book bags are safest carried close to the body with flaps, zippers, or clasps closed turned toward the body. Keep your hand on your purse or bag. Don't set it on the floor or counter in restaurants, restrooms, or theaters, or leave it in your grocery cart while shopping.

IN YOUR CAR

- **Predators know when and where people may be vulnerable or isolated.**
 - Keep car doors locked and windows rolled up most of the way.
 - Avoid traveling at night if you are having car trouble or are low on gas.
 - Park your car in well-lighted places and lock all doors.
 - Check the back seat and floors before you get into your car to be sure no one is hiding inside.
 - Keep car keys in hand when approaching your vehicle so that you may enter it with ease.
 - If security or an escort is available, have them walk you to your car.
 - If possible, carry a cellular phone, and keep it charged.
- **Predators take advantage of people's good will and trust.**
 - If you must leave car keys with garage or parking lot attendants, leave a ring with only your car keys, not house keys, which can be easily duplicated.
 - Don't pick up hitchhikers.
- **Predators are brazen.**
 - If someone tries to break into your car while you are in it, honk the horn in repeated short blasts.
 - If you are being followed, don't go home. Drive to the nearest police station, fire station, hospital emergency room, or an open gas station or convenience store – any safe place with people visibly present.

Continued...

RISK-REDUCTION TIPS: GENERAL GUIDELINES (CONT.)

IN YOUR HOME

- **Predators know when and where people may be vulnerable.**
 - It is safer using a first initial and last name on mailboxes and in phone directories.
 - Be cautious around elevators. Don't get on if you are feeling uncomfortable or unsafe. Get off if a fellow passenger seems odd or threatening.
- **Predators may take advantage of people's trust and may display warmth and concern.**
 - Change old locks when you move to a new residence. Make sure your doors have dead bolts, security chains, and peepholes. Use them.
 - Always check identification when repair people, salespeople, police, or meter readers come to your home. Don't hesitate to call and check their identification and refuse admittance if you do not feel comfortable letting them into your home.
 - Instruct children and babysitters not to give out information about who is home.
- **Predators are brazen and resourceful planners.**
 - If you suspect your home has been broken into, don't go inside. Go to a neighbor and call the police.
 - Lock your doors and windows, draw shades/blinds at night, and leave a light on implying that someone is home.
 - Lock the doors to your home or apartment when you are in the yard; take a portable telephone outside with you.
 - Don't hide spare keys outdoors. They are too easy to find.
- **Don't hesitate to call 911 if you suspect someone is outside your home or apartment.**

REMEMBER!
It's
the perpetrator,
not the victim,
who is to blame for the crime(s)
they choose to commit!