

Women Safety Tips From A Woman Cop

Tips for women on staying safe! These are well worth passing on, and are common sense for men, too.

Please read this information from a woman who works for the police department.

I have to share some things I have learned in my job with you. In my job, I review criminal and psychiatric files of imprisoned sex offenders who are approaching their release date. I decide if they are likely to re-offend based on certain criteria and then civilly commit them to a sex offender treatment facility if I decide that they are at significant risk to re-offend.

I have read hundreds and hundreds of files, and have taken note of some of the mistakes women make. Let me preface this by saying that a woman is NEVER EVER EVER at fault for being raped or attacked, but there are definitely ways to reduce your risk of being a victim.

Here are the most common mistakes women make that could result in them getting kidnapped, attacked, and/or raped:

- ❖ Getting into the attacker's car when he pulls a gun and orders you to get into his vehicle. Most attackers don't want to shoot you ... they want you to get into the car so that they can drive you to a deserted place and torture you. Don't comply. Run screaming. It is MUCH more likely than not that he will just move on to an easier target.
- ❖ Pulling over when a man drives alongside of you pointing at your car pretending something is wrong. If this happens, drive to the nearest well-lit and populated gas station and look the car over yourself (or ask an attendant). Never pull over. Believe it or not, many women have fallen for this for fear of their car spontaneously exploding in the middle of the road. Not likely.
- ❖ Not locking your doors while driving. I have read several cases where the attacker simply walks up to a woman's car while she's at a traffic light and jumps in with his gun or knife drawn.
- ❖ 4. Opening your front door when you have not positively identified who is there. If you don't have a peep hole, get one. I've seen countless cases where the attacker gains access to his victims simply by knocking on their door. Don't let an attacker get into your home. He then has a private, relatively soundproof place to attack you.
- ❖ Not being alert in parking lots. If you go to the grocery store at night, don't be shy about asking for an escort to your car. Too many women are abducted from parking lots or even raped in the parking lot. Look in your back seat before entering your car. Cars provide endless hiding places for attackers, both inside them and in between them. Be aware of your surroundings by looking to the left and right and behind you with your head up all the time. You may appear paranoid and look funny to others, but an attacker will think twice about approaching someone who appears so aware of what's going on.
- ❖ Trusting a clean cut, honest looking stranger. I see mug shots of every sex offender in the state of Florida. They do not look like monsters. They often look like they could be your friendly grocer. They are every age between 15 and 90, and probably beyond. Only a small minority actually look scary. I just read a case yesterday of a man with only one leg who beat up his victim with his crutch before he raped her. Who would have ever thought that a one legged man would be a rapist?
- ❖ Trusting people to be alone with your children. This is a difficult one, because child molesters end up being the LAST person the parents would believe is the molester. Most of the child molesting cases I see involve the stepfather, the uncle, the sister's boyfriend, the mother's boyfriend, the grandfather, the baby-sitter, the neighbor, the family friend, the youth camp director, day care worker, etc. Although rare, even women can be molesters.
- ❖ In every case, the perpetrator is a nice guy, trusting, good with children, and the family is baffled or even in disbelief that the person could be abusing their child. When it comes to your children and grandchildren, be suspicious of everyone, no matter who they are. And pay

attention to what your child says and how he/she reacts to the mention of different people in their lives.

- ❖ When having your car serviced, give the attendant only the car keys, as they have key duplicators readily available, and they generally have your address, etc. on file. I didn't mean to make anyone uncomfortable with this, but I am at work right now reviewing files, and realized that this email is a way I can reach many women at one time. I have the dirty job of reading all these files, and it makes me feel good to know that I can share some inferences from what I have learned. This is not an exhaustive list of what not to do, but just some things that I have observed more than just a few times.

Pass this on to the women in your lives.

RAPE - Suggestions for Self Protection

Rape Is Not A Selective Crime

It happens on streets, in cars, in schools, in parks, in alleys. The rapist has no regard for age, race or social status.

What is being done?

Across the state, police departments, hospitals and prosecutors' offices have revised and updated their policies and procedures. Legislators have amended laws to provide protection and encouragement for the victims of rape. Citizen groups have organized rape crisis centers to provide support and counseling to victims and their families.

Personal safety, however, must begin with the individual. Help protect yourself by taking the steps to protect yourself from sexual assaults.

Safety Tips For Rape Prevention

Be aware of the possibility of being raped....it could happen to **YOU**.

Safety at Home

Replace or re-key locks when you move into a new home or apartment. Install a door viewer and a 1 inch deadbolt lock and use them. Look before opening your door to anyone.

Keep doors locked at all times and instruct children never open your door to anyone.

Require all strangers to show identification. If you haven't called for a repairman, don't let one inside. Leave him waiting outside and call his place of business to verify his reason for being in your area.

Rape is the fastest rising violent crime in North America. What can we do to prevent this crime from happening to you? Listed below are safety tips for you to follow that can reduce your risk of assault and/or rape.

Secure you car and home. Keep a large flashlight, two quarters, a map of the city you are in and five to ten dollars in your car. The flashlight can be used as a light or weapon; the quarters are for the use of a pay phone; and the five dollars is for car emergencies only (eg., new windshield wipers or gas). Always keep your doors and windows locked and evaluate the effectiveness of the locks. Never open your door to a stranger and never tell them you are alone.

Avoid unsafe situations and strangers. If you are being followed, go to the nearest police or fire department, or any place where several people will be (convenience stores, gas station, etc.) Walk in groups at night.

Flee if you are in a potentially dangerous situation. Yell or scream to attract attention. Carry a whistle that will make a loud noise.

Engage in passive or active resistance. Passive resistance is to think and talk your way out of a situation. Active resistance is to react immediately to startle your attacker. Use any available item (HAIRSPRAY, KEYS, PURSE) as a weapon.

Think! Keep using your mind to think of alternative actions for escape.

You are responsible for your own safety. Call your local police department or rape crisis center and set up a schedule for a Law Enforcement Officer to speak to your employees or neighbors.

Don't let a stranger inside your home to use the phone; make the call for him.

Never admit that you or a neighbor are home alone.

Women living alone should use only initials on mailboxes and in telephone listings.

Leave outside lights on at night, and keep lights on in more than one room.

If you receive an obscene phone call-hang up-don't react.

Safety Tips While Walking

- When possible, avoid walking alone. Walk with someone, or walk in areas where other people are near.
- Stay in well-lighted areas, away from alleys, bushes and entry ways.
- Avoid shortcuts through parks, vacant lots and other deserted places.
- Don't hitchhike or accept rides from strangers.
- If a driver stops to ask you directions, avoid getting near the car.
- If you are being followed, go to the nearest business or residence for help.
- If you are harassed by the occupants of a car, simply turn and walk the other direction. The driver will have to turn around to follow you.
- Hold your purse close, not dangling, and avoid carrying extra money or valuables on your person.
- When you return home, have your door key ready so that you can enter without delay.

**ABOVE ALL, BE AWARE OF THE PEOPLE AROUND YOU.
BE AWARE OF YOUR SURROUNDINGS AND THE TOTAL ENVIRONMENT.**

Safety Tips While Driving

- Never pick up hitchhikers.
- Keep car doors locked at all times. While walking to your car, look under car.
- Before entering your car, look into the back seat and on floor board.
- Always have your keys ready to unlock the car door and enter without delay. Never walk across the parking lot digging in your purse for your keys; have them in your hand before leaving the building.
- Make certain that you have enough gas to get where you are going and always keep your vehicle in good running condition.
- If possible, travel on well lighted, busy streets and avoid isolated back roads and short cuts.
- If you are being followed, drive to the nearest open business for help, or drive to the Police or Fire Station.
- Never leave your house keys with your car keys at a service station or parking lot.
- Women driving alone should never stop to aid a stranger in a stalled vehicle. Proceed to an open business, and report the stalled vehicle to the police.

- If you have trouble, raise the hood, and stay in your vehicle. When someone offers assistance, roll the window down just enough to talk to them. Ask them to stop at the first phone to call a relative, friend, garage or the police for you. Never get into a stranger's car.

Safety Tips For Youth

- Children should be made aware of the dangers of accepting rides from or talking to strangers.
- Children should be encouraged to talk with their parents if they ever have a problem, not only with a stranger but also with a friend or relative.
- Children should know a safe, well-traveled route to take to and from school. Isolated areas should be avoided.
- Teenage baby-sitters should not accept jobs with people they do not know, or who have not been referred by people they know.
- Baby-sitters should call the police immediately if anything suspicious happens at the house. They should never open the door for strangers.
- The sitter's parents should be called at the end of the evening to inform them that the sitter will be home shortly.
- You may follow the advise and safety tips recommended and still find yourself confronted by an attacker. If it happens, you will have only seconds to decide your method of defense, so you must prepare mentally for the possibility of rape happening to you.

Reporting A Rape

The Police Department can only arrest a criminal if they are made aware of the offense. If you are raped, call **911** or the Police **IMMEDIATELY**.

DON'T CHANGE CLOTHES OR TAKE A BATH OR SHOWER and do NOT EAT or SMOKE or CHEW GUM. All physical evidence, including seminal fluids, hair, blood types, and scrapings of flesh from the victim's nails are used in court. Avoid using the bathroom prior to the exam if possible.

Information Most Needed By Police:

1. Car license, make or model and color
2. Race of assailant
3. Approximate age, weight and height
4. Hair color and length of hair
5. Color of eyes
6. Clothing
7. Any unusual marks, scars, tattoos, rings, etc.
8. Any facial hair or odors

Practice being observant so that, if you are raped or attacked, you will be able to remember and identify the assailant.