



Get Home Safely

Our local communities are important parts of our everyday lives, full of people we care about and want to see regularly. With so many good people and fun times within our local communities, it's often easy to forget that there's also dangerous people and places all around us too.

With this in mind, we wanted to pull together a quick guide to help you with being safe and getting home safely or should you ever find yourself in a vulnerable situation.

Contents

[Walking safety](#)

[Plan ahead](#)

[When travelling on foot](#)

[Remain aware](#)

[Personal alarms](#)

[The purpose of a personal alarm](#)

[Important features](#)

[Consider](#)

[When & how to use an alarm](#)

[Transport safety](#)

[Taxis and Minicabs](#)

[If you feel threatened:](#)

[Cycling Safety](#)

[On Public Transport](#)

[Street crime](#)

[What should I do to keep safe?](#)

[Smartphones and tablets](#)

[General advice](#)

[How do I register my belongings?](#)

[bSafe](#)

[Summary](#)

Walking safety

Plan ahead

- Before you go out, consider how you are going to get home, e.g. Can you travel home with a friend? What time does the last bus/train leave? Is there somewhere you can go if you can't travel?
- Prepare for your day before you leave – consider what you might need.
- Update someone on your plans. Consider using a service on your phone to share your location: [Apple phones \(http://bit.ly/AppleShareLocation\)](http://bit.ly/AppleShareLocation); [Google maps \(http://bit.ly/GoogleShareLocation\)](http://bit.ly/GoogleShareLocation); [Whatsapp \(http://bit.ly/ShareWhatsAppLocation\)](http://bit.ly/ShareWhatsAppLocation)
- Consider carrying a personal alarm (see our guide below on [Personal alarms](#)).

- Plan your journey – [Google Street View](http://bit.ly/GuideToGoogleStreetView) (<http://bit.ly/GuideToGoogleStreetView>) is particularly useful for identifying landmarks in an unknown area.

When travelling on foot

- Try to use well-lit, busy streets and use the route you know best.
- Plan your route, and look confident as you travel.
- If you do have to pass higher risk areas, consider what how you'd respond if you felt threatened.
- Consider heading for a public place; somewhere you know there will be other people, for example a garage or shop.
- Whenever possible, walk facing oncoming traffic to avoid any cars that pull up beside you.
- If you think you are being followed, trust your instincts and take action. As confidently as you can, cross the road, turning to see who is behind you. If you are still being followed, keep moving. Head to a busy area and tell people what is happening. If necessary, call the police.

Remain aware

- Keep your mind on your surroundings – avoid distractions such as your mobile phone or headphones.
- Be aware when using cash point machines. If there are signs of tampering or people acting suspiciously, do not use it.
- Try not to keep all your valuables in one place. It's a good idea to keep valuables such as wallets in an inside pocket.
- Consider carrying a personal safety alarm, which can be used to shock and disorientate an attacker giving you vital seconds to get away.

Personal alarms

There are lots of different types of personal alarms. Choosing the best one for you can sometimes be tricky. Read on for tips on how to make the right choice.

The purpose of a personal alarm

The purpose of a personal safety alarm is to **shock** and **disorientate** an attacker, giving you vital seconds to get away.

Important features

- The most important feature of an alarm is the sound it emits. If an attacker is to be shocked enough to pull away from you, this sound needs to be as loud and as shrill as possible. It is a common misconception that alarms will attract others as, if there is no one around, or others are far from us, they may not be attracted to the sound. If a personal alarm makes a sound like a car alarm, the sound may not be recognisable by others as an attack alarm.
- The most effective sound is continuous and over 130 decibels (approx. 138db is ideal).
- Your alarm needs to be easy to carry, and be easy to set off in one hand. Consider whether a very lightweight and tiny alarm will be as loud or accessible as you need it to be.

Consider

- How would you operate the alarm in an emergency?

- There are many different ways to activate different types of alarms, including push caps, push buttons and pull out pins.
- How fiddly is it to activate it?
- Do you have problems using your hands or fingers?
- Can it be operated simply by being pushed against something?

When & how to use an alarm

The primary function of an alarm is to distract and disorientate an attacker.

- Set off the alarm, holding it as close to the attacker's face as possible.
- Drop the alarm and make your escape. If it is by the attacker's feet, it may also act as a visual distraction, as well as an audible distraction.
- If you are able to attract the attention of passers-by, you are more likely to get help if you shout a specific instruction – such as "Call the police!". This makes it clear that you are in danger and need help.

Remember: Once you have set off your alarm, leave the situation as quickly as you can, moving to a busy area if possible. Don't wait to check that your alarm has had the desired effect; just go.

Remember: A personal alarm should be just one part of your personal safety plan. There are lots of other ways in which you can help to reduce the risk of violence and aggression.

Transport safety

Travelling by train, bus or taxi/minicab is generally very safe but violent and aggressive incidents do happen, so it makes sense to take a few simple precautions to improve your safety and increase your confidence.

Taxis and Minicabs

- London taxis (Hackney Carriages) can be hailed in the street. They look like purpose-built taxis or black cabs and have an illuminated taxi sign on the roof.
- Licensed minicabs cannot be hailed in the street. They must be pre-booked. The driver should have ID and the vehicle will have some sort of license displayed on it.
- Always carry the telephone number of a trusted, licensed company with you, and consider calling them from inside a venue if you are worried about travelling by yourself.
- When booking a taxi or minicab, ask for the driver's name, as well as the make and colour of the car. Confirm the driver's details when they arrive – is it the taxi or minicab you ordered?
- Sharing a taxi or minicab with a friend and sitting in the back of the car are good safety strategies.
- If you chat to the driver, be careful not to give out any personal details.

Remember: Minicabs that pick-up fares on the street, without being pre-booked, are illegal, uninsured and potentially very dangerous.

If you feel threatened

- Trust your instincts - If you are at all worried, ask the driver to stop in a busy area and get out of the car.
- If the driver refuses to stop, use your mobile phone (if you have one) to call the police and alert other drivers and pedestrians by waving or calling out the window.

Cycling Safety

- Keep your bike in good working order. Repairs are best done at home rather than on the road.
- Try not to look lost - always look like you know where you are going.
- Dress to be seen and to be safe. Remember to wear a safety helmet.
- Obey the rules of the road and make sure you are aware of your surroundings.
- Avoid short-cuts even if you are in a hurry. Never cycle anywhere you would not be comfortable walking.

On public transport

- Know where you are going, and which stop you need.
- Check departure times, especially of last buses or trains.
- Try and have your ticket, pass or change ready in your hand so your purse or wallet is out of sight.
- If travelling at night or in an unfamiliar area, try and arrange for someone to meet you at the bus stop or train station. Otherwise try to walk near other people with whom you feel safe and walk purposefully to your destination.
- Wait for a bus or train in a well-lit place near other people whenever possible.
- Carry extra money in case you get stranded and need to take another bus, train or cab.
- If a bus is empty or it is after dark, it may be safer to stay on the lower deck and sit near the driver.
- On trains avoid compartments which have no access to corridors or other parts of the train. Try to sit with other people and avoid empty carriages.
- If you feel uneasy, move to another seat or carriage. If you feel threatened, make as much noise as possible to attract the attention of the driver or guard.

Street crime

Thieves target phones (especially smartphones), tablets, laptops and handbags.

By taking a few simple precautions you can keep yourself safe when in public places and protect yourself from becoming a victim of crime.

What should I do to keep safe?

Smartphones and tablets

- theft of these items is prominent due to their high resale value
- try not to expose them on the street too much and be aware of your surroundings when using them in public
- in cafes and restaurants, be aware of distraction crime (people asking you questions or selling things) and keep these items in your sight at all times

General advice

- carry your bag close to you with the clasp facing inwards. Keep it zipped up, and make sure your wallet or purse can't be seen. Don't carry large amounts of cash
- when at a bar or a restaurant keep your belongings safe. Keep bags where you can see them but out of reach of passers-by. Use bag hooks under tables if they are available

- be aware of distraction techniques, people asking directions or selling things in shops, especially if you have a smartphone or tablet
- if you use your mobile phone on the street be aware of your surroundings while you're on the phone and after your call has ended
- spread your possessions about - keep your mobile phone separate from your purse, and your keys separate from your credit card
- take care when using cash dispensers - don't let people see your PIN number as you enter it. If in doubt, wait until they go away or take your card elsewhere. If your card appears to be stuck in the machine and there's no alerting display, run your finger around the inside of the slot. If you feel a little tongue or tag, try pulling gently. Your card may emerge - along with a sleeve placed into the slot to trap the card for a thief
- cover up any expensive jewellery and, if you must carry other valuables, be discreet
- if someone does threaten you for your phone, bag or other possessions, and there is no way you can get away safely, hand it over to them. Don't risk your personal safety for your possessions.

How do I register my belongings?

- Registering your belongings with immobilise.com will increase the chances of you getting them back after they have been taken from you.

bSafe

bSafe is an app for both iPhone and Android phones. It provides a number of innovative ways to help you travel around safely each day.

We recommend you get used to using all the available features and setting up your 'guardians' before you need to use this in a real scenario where you are dependent on it to help support your personal safety.

<https://getbsafe.com/>

Summary

With all of the above points in mind, please remember you can still have fun and enjoy yourself when you're travelling around, you just need to be aware of the dangers. With a bit of pre-planning and thought for your own safety, you can continue to get the most your nights out and your local community.

Thanks to our references:

<https://www.suzylamplugh.org>

<https://peoplesafe.co.uk>

<https://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/content/policing-and-public-safety/crime-and-law-enforcement/crime-prevention/> (<http://bit.ly/CamdenCrimePrevention>)

A PERSONAL SAFETY GUIDE, CREATED BY WWW.SATANICTEMPLEINTERNATIONAL.ORG

