

How to Protect Yourself on City Streets

Whether you live in a big city or are just visiting, it is vital to know how to remain safe on the city streets. People who come from smaller towns may be caught off guard by the amount of crime and violent activity that is present in large cities, but by being aware and taking a few precautions you can stay safe wherever you go.

Be Vigilant

The most important thing you can do when you are on city streets or anywhere else is to be aware of your surroundings. Understand that criminals look for easy opportunities to assault an unsuspecting victim. A typical target will be a person who is clearly from out of town and may be intimidated by big city life. Be careful where you go, and pay attention to everything and everyone around you. A predator never wants to be seen before committing a crime, so if you walk intently with your head held high and survey everything, you will be a far less likely target.

When you are out at night, try to stay in areas that are brightly lit. Darker streets and alleys offer the perfect cover for an assailant to hide and catch you by surprise. Walk with friends anytime you can, because criminals are far less likely to approach a group than an individual. If you are alone, keep a brisk pace, get to where you are going and make your way inside. As you return to your vehicle, be prepared to get in right away. Lock the door and drive off quickly. You never know when a predator may be nearby watching to see if you linger and give them an opportunity to assault you.

Guard Your Money

In the city there are thousands of people around, so the odds of encountering a predator become very high. They watch for potential victims at all times, and one of the things they look for is someone who is obviously carrying a large amount of money or valuable personal items. Never flash cash on a city street, as that will encourage a thief to target you. It's a good idea to keep your money well hidden and located in an area that is difficult to get to. A pick pocket may be able to pull your wallet out of a back or jacket pocket, but will be far less likely to attempt to reach into a front pocket, which makes that an ideal location to store your money and credit cards. Some experts also recommend carrying a second wallet with just a small amount of money and invalid credit cards. That way you have something to turn over if you are ever mugged.

Women should carry their purses close to their bodies, but not with the shoulder strap placed securely around the neck. A purse snatcher may be determined to take what you have, and it can turn violent as they wrench the purse from you. It's better to let a thief take your personal belongings than to risk being hurt. Carry as little cash as possible, and only one or two credit cards. Then if the purse is taken, your loss will not be too great.

A Street Encounter

Although it's always best to be polite, even to strangers, it is a good idea to be very wary of anyone you don't know who approaches you. They may ask for directions, money or anything else. Answer quickly, and continue on your way. If they persist, tell them that you are unable to help and mention that a police officer would be better suited to provide assistance. You may find yourself being followed, and if so remain in a public area. Find a police station or security guard and explain your predicament.

Carrying a personal alarm is a great way to deter strangers who will not back down. Sounding the alarm will grab the attention of everyone around, and focus it on you. A predator won't want to be seen by witnesses, and will leave you alone.

In Case Of Assault

When an attack is unavoidable, you must be prepared to fight back. Practice any self defense maneuvers you know and aim for pressure points on the assailant's body. If you have a self defense weapon like pepper spray or a stun gun, don't be afraid to use it. The device will protect you and leave no permanent damage on the aggressor.

Anyone who has been hurt during a violent assault or rape while visiting the city should seek out immediate medical attention. Get to a hospital as quickly as possible, and make a full report with the police.