

Tips for Ensuring Safety on Campus

By the Atlanta Regional Consortium for Higher Education

Personal Safety

Basic rules:

- If you notice someone who seems out of place or behaves suspiciously, report the person to security or the police.
- Be aware of your surroundings.
- Use the buddy system.
- If you must travel somewhere alone, make sure a roommate, close friend or relative knows where you are going and when you are expected back.
- Keep dorm room/apartment doors locked at all times. Keep a list of emergency numbers by the phone.
- Do not accept rides with strangers or with persons who may be intoxicated.
- Never reveal your phone number to a wrong number caller. Ask what number they dialed and advise them to try it again.
- Don't reveal to a caller that you are home alone, and hang up on obscene callers.
- Don't give out personal information to a stranger on the phone.
- Report abandoned or suspicious packages or bags to security or the police.
- Carry a cellular phone.
- Carry only necessary cash and credit cards.

On foot:

- Walk with confidence and take note of your surroundings. Avoid shortcuts.
- After dark, walk with others or use a shuttle service.
- Use well-lit walkways.
- Walk facing traffic.
- Make mental notes about the locations of emergency phones/pay phones along your route.
- If carrying a purse, keep it closed and close to your body.
- Don't wear a walkman when walking alone.
- If you think you are being followed:
- Cross the street and change direction.
- Keep looking back, so the person realizes you spot him/her.
- Notice as many physical characteristics as possible so you can describe the person.
- Get to a well-lit, populated area.
- Report the incident to security or the police.

Inside a building:

- Don't enter elevators with someone who looks out of place or behaves suspiciously. Report the person to security or the police.
- Don't go into a stairwell alone.
- Keep the door locked if you are in a room alone and ask who is there before opening a door when someone knocks on it.
- Keep your purse, wallet or other valuable items with you at all times. Never leave them unattended.
- Never prop open locked exterior building doors.

In your car:

- Always lock your car when you leave it.
- Keep your keys in your hand while you walk to your car. Pay attention to the area surrounding your car and check the floor and back seat of your car before getting in.
- Park in well-lit areas and as close as possible to the building you are visiting.
- If leaving after dark, ask someone you trust to walk you to your car or call for a security escort.
- Don't leave valuable items in plain view inside your car. Lock any valuables in the trunk.
- Don't drive alone at night if possible.
- Never pick up hitchhikers.
- Always keep your doors locked when inside your car. If possible, keep the windows up. If your car breaks down and someone stops to assist you, it is better to ask that person to call the police for you than to accept a ride.
- If you see flashing blue lights on the car behind you, do not pull over until you are in a well-lit, populated area. A police officer will understand your concern.
- If you think you are being followed;
- Go to the nearest police or fire station, residence hall, or open building.
- If no safe areas are near, honk the horn and turn on your hazard lights.

Using ATMs:

- Use automatic teller machines (ATMs) that are busy, easily seen by the public, and located in well-lit areas.
- Avoid using the ATM alone or at night.
- Do not stand at an ATM and count your money.

Property Safety

- Always lock your room when you leave, even if only for a few minutes.
- Keep records of your equipment that give the make, model and manufacturer's serial number.
- Inscribe a personal identifier number on all equipment.
- When not in use, store computers and equipment in a locked room or cabinet.
- Write your name on the inside of your books.
- Never leave purses, bookbags or other belongings unattended when at the library, in a classroom, in lounge areas or in eating areas.
- Secure your car license plate with tamper proof bolts.
- Don't leave your vehicle registration, important identification papers, credit cards or money inside your car.
- Keep a record of your car's tag number, vehicle identification number (VIN), and complete description in your wallet or your residence.
- Store valuable items in the trunk or your car; do not leave anything in plain view.
- Park a bicycle in well-lit, frequently traveled areas. Use a U-shaped bicycle lock or case-hardened chain.
- Keep a record of your bicycle's make, model and manufacturer's serial number.