

Melbourne Beach Police Department Tips for Personal Safety

Personal Safety

The key to personal safety is being aware of places or situations that put you at risk.

In your home

- Get to know your neighbors. Make arrangements to keep an eye on each other's homes when away. If there are Neighborhood Watch members on your block, advise them if you will be away for an extended period.
- Draw drapes or close blinds after dark.
- Ensure that you're outside doors and door frames are sturdy. This includes entry doors in attached garages.
- Install security-rated locks (i.e. deadbolts rather than bathroom door locks) on main doors and windows.
- Install a 180-degree peephole in your door. Identify visitors before opening your door and do not open your door to strangers.
- If a stranger asks to use your phone, offer to make the call yourself.
- List only your initials and last name on your mailbox or in the phone book. Do not list your first name or indicate Mr., Mrs., Ms. or Miss.
- Never give personal information to telephone solicitors or wrong number callers.
- Have emergency telephone numbers on or near your phone.
- Make sure that all entrances are well lit. Install a light timer.
- Have your keys ready as you approach the door. Do not hide spare keys outside the home.
- Be aware of your surroundings and evaluate your situation so you can make decisions about your safety. Stay alert in laundry rooms, parking garages, elevators and avoid dark or secluded streets.
- Be aware of what security measures a website is using to protect your personal information when requested over the internet.

In your vehicle

- Keep your vehicle locked when you are driving or when it's parked.
- Have your keys ready when approaching your parked car. Do a check of the inside of your car before entering.

- If you are being followed, drive to a police station or a busy public area such as a 24-hr convenience store or gas station. Try to note the license plate number and make of the car.
- Park in well lit areas. Be observant so you can assess your surroundings and safety, especially in parking garages.
- Do not leave car registration and insurance documents in your vehicle. They show your address and other personal information.
- Keep your garage door opener out of sight until you need it. Thieves can use it to get into your home.
- Do not hide spare keys under the hood, the bumpers or anywhere else on the car.
- Have regular vehicle tune-ups to keep your vehicle in good working order.
- If your vehicle breaks down, raise the hood and switch on the hazard lights. Stay inside with the windows up and keep the doors locked. If somebody offers help, assess your situation to see if it is safe to accept assistance. Is the helper another motorist with a family or a lone driver? If you feel unsafe, ask the helper to call for assistance.
- If possible, carry a cell phone with you.
- You can help stranded motorists by phoning for assistance.

In your community

- Be assertive when walking. Attackers see victims who appear intimidated or vulnerable.
- Plan your route ahead of time before going for a walk and let others know where you are going.
- Walk with a companion if you feel that being alone may put you at risk. Observe your surroundings. If you are hesitant about rounding a corner or walking down a certain street, follow your instincts.
- Stay on busier, well-lit streets. Avoid dark or concealed areas and never assume parked cars are empty.
- Do not overload yourself with parcels. These may block your view or reduce your mobility.
- If you are followed, quickly assess your options. Can you run or change directions? Are there people nearby, a house or an open business to run to? Is there a well-lit area to move towards?
- Never hitchhike