

# Personal Safety & Security

## What are some tips to protect myself at home?

Consider the following tips for keeping yourself safe in your home:

- Never automatically open your door. Confirm who is there first.
  - Install and use a peephole.
  - Lock your doors and windows.
  - Install deadbolts on your doors.
  - Keep your home well-lit at night.
  - Do not hide your keys under a doormat, plant, or in other obvious places.
  - Be wary of unsolicited offers to make repairs to your home.
  - Ask for identification from delivery persons and strangers.
  - Keep on inventory with serial numbers and photographs of appliances, electronics, antiques, and furniture.
  - Cancel deliveries (like newspapers) when going away for a trip.
  - Arrange for your mail to be held by the post office when going away for a trip.
  - Make your home look like someone is there when you are away. Use an automatic timer for lights when you are gone for several days.
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## What are some tips for protecting myself in public places?

Consider the following tips for keeping yourself safe when you are out and about:

- Avoid walking alone at night.
- Plan your route and stay alert to your surroundings.
- Walk in well-lit areas.
- Have your key ready when approaching your car or door.
- Do not dangle your purse away from your body.
- Do not carry large, bulky shoulder bags.

- Never leave your purse unattended.
  - Do not carry any more cash than is necessary.
  - Always lock your car doors.
  - Lock packages or bags in your trunk. If packages are in sight, a thief may be tempted to steal them.
  - If you are attacked, make as much noise as possible.
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## **What are some tips for protecting my banking and financial affairs?**

Consider the following tips for keeping your bank account and finances safe:

- Avoid mailing checks. Whenever possible, use direct deposit.
  - Never give money or wire money to anyone who calls you identifying himself as a bank official. A bank will never ask you to remove your money.
  - Be wary of con artists and get-rich schemes.
  - Store valuables in a bank safe deposit box.
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## **What are some tips to keep myself safe while using the Internet?**

Consider the following tips about Internet safety:

- Protect your personal information. Never give your personal information over the Internet to a business or person that you do not know.
- Do research about websites and companies trying to solicit you before you buy goods or reveal personal information.
- Never trust a link sent to you by someone you do not know. Clicking on the link could send you to a site that looks like your bank but is actually a site to steal your personal information. If you are in doubt, call your bank and speak to a representative.
- Be wary of emails asking for personal information. No bank, government agency, or reputable company will send you an email asking you to correct or update information, confirm your identity, or enter your password.

- Never download programs from websites that you do not trust. Viruses can steal your personal information.
- Be wary of any email or solicitation that creates a sense of urgency. For example, “if we do not hear from you by tomorrow,” or “this offer will not last.” Scammers want you to act quickly and not have time to consider that it might be a scam.
- Consider installing a service that blocks or reduces spam.
- Limit online dealings to a few trusted vendors.
- Use one specific credit card for online purchases. Debit cards are a direct line to your bank account and do not offer the same protections from fraud as credit cards.
- Be creative with online passwords.
- Trust your instincts and talk to family members or friends if you are in doubt. If something sounds good to be true, it usually is.

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[Table of Contents](#)

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