



# Shelby County Sheriff's Office

MARK H. LUTTRELL, JR. - SHERIFF

## Crime Information Bulletin



## Robbery Prevention Tips

### Robbery Prevention Tips:

#### **YOUR DEMEANOR:**

- TRUST YOUR INSTINCTS - If you sense trouble, get away as soon as possible.
- SHOW CONFIDENCE - Walk at a steady pace, keep your head up and avoid carrying lots of packages...It can make you look defenseless.
- DON'T LOOK LIKE AN EASY TARGET – Robbers want someone who will provide the least resistance. If you look like you know where you are going, walk with your head up and eyes alert, you will most likely be left alone.
- BE OBSERVANT.
- REMAIN ALERT AND OBSERVE PEOPLE AROUND YOU. Know who is walking behind and in front of you. Things to watch for include suspicious persons or vehicles, people who are wearing inappropriate clothing for the weather (EX. A long trench coat in the middle of summer), and people just loitering around.

#### **AT HOME:**

- Do not allow strangers into your home, even if they are hurt or say they need help. Keep the door locked and call the police for them.
- Do not advertise that you live alone.
- Don't be afraid to call the police to investigate suspicious circumstances, unusual people or strange noises. It is better to be safe than sorry.
- When you move into a new home, change the locks.
- Keep your curtains or shades closed at night.
- Don't leave notes on your door announcing when you will be home.
- Keep outdoor lights on at night.
- Never give information to an unknown caller. Report nuisance calls to the police and the telephone company.
- Keep your doors and windows locked. If it is warm and you leave your door open for circulation, keep the screen door locked.
- If you arrive home and your door is open or things appear to be out of place - don't go in your home. Leave and call the police.



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- Write down license numbers of suspicious vehicles to give to the police, if necessary.

### **AT WORK:**

- Keep your front doors and windows clear of signs and posters to allow good, two way visibility. Employees can see suspicious persons outside. Passers-by and police can see inside.
- Keep the outside of your business well lit at night.
- Make sure your cash register area is clearly visible to outside observers.
- Practice good cash control. Keep a minimum amount in your cash drawer and make regular drops into a safe.
- Advertise outside that you keep a minimal amount of cash in the register and that you will not accept large bills.
- Don't keep large bills under the cash drawer. If you don't have a safe, find a less obvious place to hide your extra cash until you go to the bank.
- Use a safe that the clerk cannot open alone or that requires two keys. Post that fact conspicuously, including on the safe itself.
- Use video camera surveillance and make it well known.
- Always have at least two clerks working at night.
- Vary your banking routine. Carry cash in a variety of ways - a lunch sack, attaché case, flight bag, pocket, etc. Money bags are pretty obvious.
- Vary the times and routes that you use to go to the bank.
- Make deposits as often as possible, never less than once a day.
- Be alert for "customers" who seem to be loitering or glancing around the store while appearing to shop or browse through a magazine.
- Watch for suspicious persons outside the business - especially in parked cars and around telephone booths.
- If you see someone who is acting suspicious inside or outside, call the police to have them checked out.
- Two persons should be on hand at opening and closing times.
- At opening time, one person should enter the store and check to see if it has been disturbed.
- Before closing, one person should check the office, back rooms and rest rooms to make sure no one is hiding inside.
- Keep side and back doors locked. Have employees use the main entrance, if possible.
- Place markers at the main entrance that employees can use to help gauge the height of a robber as he leaves.



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### ON THE ROAD:

- Know your destination and have a planned route of travel.
- Keep your car in gear, doors locked, windows rolled up.
- Stay alert and aware of your surroundings, especially at intersections and stop lights.
- Park in areas that will be well lit when you return.
- There is safety in numbers! Walk with friends or a in a group.
- If you are lost, find a public place, like a service station, to read your map or ask for directions.
- If you are being followed, don't drive home or get out. Drive to the nearest police station, open store or business for help. Try to note the license number and description of the car and persons following you.
- Don't advertise. If you are out at night, don't wear expensive or fancy looking jewelry. This is an invitation to trouble.
- If someone tries to get in your car while you are stopped - *drive away quickly*.
- Don't use ATM machines at night. Plan ahead and get your cash during safer times. Use ATM machines that are very visible. Avoid isolated ATM machines.
- Keep any valuables in the trunk, in a locked glove compartment, or out of sight whenever traveling or leaving a vehicle parked.
- When using valet parking, provide the parking clerk with the valet key that most car manufacturers provide now. This prevents strangers from looking in your glove compartment and trunk and finding personal information.
- Walk in open, well lit areas.
- Avoid carrying a purse, if you can. If you must, carry your purse securely and close to your body. Do not allow your purse to hang free from your hand.
- Check the interior of your vehicle and surrounding areas before entering your vehicle.
- Do not pick up hitchhikers.



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If you are robbed, follow these tips for getting out of the robbery safely.

### **What to do DURING a robbery:**

- STAY CALM. Do not make any sudden movements to upset the robber.
- DON'T BE A HERO! Your life is worth more than your money!
- Follow the robber's directions, but not volunteer more than he asks for.
- Activate an alarm ONLY if you can do it secretly.
- Tell the robber about anything that might surprise him. Example: You are expecting company soon.
- If you have to move, tell the robber what you are doing and why.
- Try to get a good look at the robber so that you can describe him later. Make mental notes of race, age, sex, height, weight, hair and eye color, build, and clothing. Note anything unusual about the robber, such as scars, tattoos, strange mannerisms or speech patterns.
- Note the type, size and color of the weapon used.
- Give the robber time to leave.
- Note the direction of the robber when he leaves
- Try to get a description of the vehicle ONLY if you can do so without putting yourself in harm's way.

### **What to do AFTER a robbery:**

- CALL THE POLICE IMMEDIATELY. Even if you have already activated an alarm, you should still call the police.
- DO NOT TOUCH ANYTHING THE ROBBER HAS TOUCHED. You may smudge a fingerprint.
- TRY AND RECALL AS MUCH AS YOU CAN ABOUT THE ROBBER. Write down everything you can think of while it is still fresh in your mind, including the robber's speech and mannerisms.
- If there are any witnesses, ask them to remain until the police arrive. If they are unable to stay, get the witness' name, address, and phone number.
- Ask all the witnesses to write down their account of the robbery, including suspect information. Do not compare notes. People observe things in different ways, so what you might notice, another person may not and vice versa. Comparing notes could cause memories to be skewed.