

Vacation Security

Crime and Violence Prevention Center • California Attorney General's Office



Vacation is a time for fun and relaxation. Don't let yours be ruined by crime. Follow the crime prevention tips below.

Before leaving . . .

- Install good locks on all doors and windows, and USE THEM!
- Engrave your valuables with your drivers license number (preceded by "CA") and post Operation I.D. stickers in entry doors and windows.
- Never leave your house key hidden outside under a doormat, in a flower pot, or on the ledge of a door.
- Make your house appear "lived in." Use timers for lights and radios. Have a neighbor or a friend pick up mail, packages and newspapers, and keep the lawns mowed and watered.
- Leave your trip plans and an emergency phone number with trusted neighbors or friends.

On the road

- Never carry large amounts of cash; use traveler's checks. If you must carry large sums of money, do not display it openly.
- Keep a record of traveler's check numbers and your credit card numbers in a safe place. Have the telephone numbers to call in case your checks or credit cards are lost or stolen.
- Be aware of your surroundings and never advertise your plans to strangers; this includes travel routes and the amount of cash you are carrying.
- Do not stop to offer help to a stranded motorist. Go to the nearest phone booth and call for assistance.
- If you suspect someone is following you, drive to the nearest service station, restaurant or business and call the police or sheriff's department. If you believe it is unsafe to get out of your car, sound your horn and flash your lights to draw attention.
- If your car breaks down, raise the hood and attach a white flag to the antenna. If someone stops to help, it is advisable that you stay in your locked car and ask them to call the police or a garage. If you must abandon your car, keep all passengers together.

Car Security

- Always lock your car after entering or leaving it.
- Park in well-lighted areas.
- Check the back seat before entering your car.
- Mark your car radio and other removable car equipment with your driver's license number (preceded by "CA").
- Always lock valuables out of sight, preferably in the trunk. Always carry wallet, checkbooks and purses with you.
- Do not advertise that you are a tourist. Place maps and travel brochures in the glove compartment.

Sight-seeing

Remember: Planning reduces your chances of becoming the victim of a crime.

- Ask for directions at a hotel/motel on how to get to those attractions you want to visit.
- Select tour guides carefully.

- Ask if there are any areas in town you should avoid. Stick to well-lighted main streets and public areas.
- Looking lost (stopping and looking at addresses or staring at street signs) may make you look like an easy target for crime. If you do get lost, find an open business and ask for directions.
- Only carry with you the cash you will need, and only small denominations.
- If older children go off separately, be sure they understand the importance of keeping track of time and returning promptly at appointed hours.

Hotel and motel security

When staying overnight at a hotel or motel, remember the following:

- Determine the most direct route to and from your room, to the fire escapes, elevators and nearest phone.
- When occupying or leaving your room, use all auxiliary locking devices on doors and windows. (You may want to purchase a portable door lock for traveling.)
- Use the door viewer to identify anyone requesting entry. Open the door only if you are certain the person has a legitimate reason to enter your room. If in doubt, call the hotel/motel office.
- Unpack and place belongings in the closet and dresser. Arrange your things so you'll know if anything is missing.
- Consider locking any electrical appliances (blow dryers, electrical shavers, etc.) in your luggage. Suitcases should always be locked so they can not be used to carry your property out of your room.
- Never leave money, checks, credit cards or car keys in the room. Take them with you.
- Place extra cash, expensive jewelry or other valuables (furs, gems, gold, or silver) in the hotel/motel safe.
- Report any lost or stolen items to the hotel/motel management and to the police.
- Report to the management any suspicious movements in the corridors or rooms.

Remember– the only way to stop crime is to get involved in crime prevention.



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