

## Ten ways to become a victim of crime

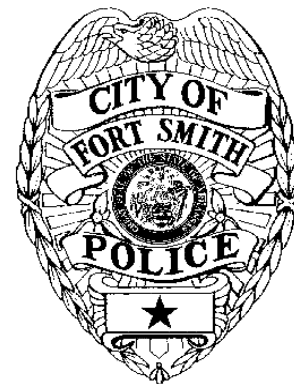
1. Make sure you frequent places where visibility is poor.
2. Save time by taking shortcuts through places where you shouldn't be.
3. Be a hero.
4. Brag about your possessions.
5. Leave valuables in your vehicle so others can see them.
6. When you leave home, turn all your lights off to save electricity.
7. Never lock anything.
8. Trust everyone, especially those who are dressed nice.
9. Ignore your surroundings.
10. Carry a weapon. The bigger the better.



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## Self- Protection



The most important thing a person can do to protect themselves is to be alert at all times. Know your surroundings, not only when you're alone on the street, but when you're home also.

The following information is provided by the Fort Smith Police Department in order to assist you in protecting yourself at home and away.

## Home

- Get to know your neighbors. This way, you can count on each other to watch both homes.
- Lock all doors and windows before leaving.
- Don't leave notes on the front door advising that you're not at home.
- Leave a light on in the home when you're gone. It's also a good idea to leave a radio or T.V. on while you're gone.
- Replace old locks with deadbolt locks.
- Close blinds or curtains in home when you leave.
- Have your door keys ready when you approach the front door.
- Install a peephole in your front door so you can see who's at the door.
- Never let a stranger into the home. Ask for identification before allowing someone claiming to be a repairman, salesman, or police officer inside.

## Vehicle

- Keep your valuables out of sight. Keep them in the trunk, glove box, or under the seat.
- If your trunk has an access button inside the vehicle, engage the "Lock-out" option for the trunk. This way, someone who breaks into your vehicle cannot access the trunk simply by pushing the trunk button.
- Park your vehicle in well lighted areas.
- Don't leave your keys in the ignition when you're away from your vehicle.
- Keep your windows rolled up and doors locked if possible.
- Have keys ready when approaching your vehicle.
- If you are approached by someone while you're stopped at an intersection, honk your horn to draw attention and drive away if at all possible.
- If you have car trouble, raise the hood on the car, but stay inside the vehicle. If someone stops to help, ask them to call somebody. Don't go anywhere with someone you don't know.
- Never pick up a hitchhiker.
- If an unmarked police car tries to pull you over, don't stop. Go to a public place or wait for marked police vehicles to arrive.
- Remember to lock your vehicle even when it's parked in your driveway or opened garage. Your vehicle is just as likely to be broken into at your home as anywhere else.

## By Yourself

- Be aware of your surroundings.
- Know where you're going.
- Walk with someone if possible.
- Keep belongings, such as a purse, close to your body.
- Don't count large amounts of cash in front of others.
- Stay in well lighted areas.
- Don't take shortcuts through alleys, parking garages, parks, etc.
- If someone is following you, pick up your pace and find a store or other business to go to. Scream or holler in order to draw attention to yourself.
- Carry a whistle or other noise making device.
- Plan on something happening to you and go over scenarios in your mind. This will help you to be mentally prepared and calmer if you are confronted by someone.

One of the most often asked questions is whether or not someone should carry a weapon. Weapons may tend to make you feel safe, however, they can be easily taken away and used against you. Therefore, it is not recommended that you carry a weapon unless you're thoroughly trained with it.