

# Personal Security

The smartest thing you can do is to be aware of your surroundings and use these simple precautions to keep you and your possessions safe.

## *At Home*

- **Keep your doors and windows locked at all times.** Your property provider is required under California State law to install and maintain operable deadbolt locks for your rental unit. Don't leave your keys under a doormat, over a doorway, or in any other obvious place someone will find it. If you thought of the hiding place, so has the thief!
- **Know your neighbors.** Pick one that you feel is trustworthy and can be contacted in case of emergency. Keep his number on speed dial and cell phone.
- **Fire Alarms should be in good working order.** Keep the emergency numbers on the fridge, programmed on your speed dial, and in your contact list on your cell phone.
- **Engrave your Drivers license number on your valuable property.** Keep a list, serial numbers, and photos of your valuables in a file box, ready for a police report, if necessary. Don't try and remember what you might be missing, look at your list and be sure.
- **Be aware of escape routes in case of emergency.** In case of fire, you and your roommates should have a place to meet to make sure everyone is out and accounted for.
- **Be a responsible roommate.** Let your roommates know where you will be going and when to expect you. If you are not coming home that evening, they should know so they don't worry. This is not "mothering" you, this is a matter of consideration and respect.

## *On the Street*

- **Always be aware of people and your surroundings.** Avoid trying shortcuts, alleys, or doorways that make you uncomfortable. **Trust your instincts!** If it doesn't feel right, avoid it!
- **Don't go alone.** There is safety in numbers. Don't engage in conversations with anyone you don't know. Look them in the eye, and go on.
- **Keep your valuables close to your body.** Don't swing your purse around or loop it across your neck.
- **Don't be fooled by time of day.** Just because it is light, doesn't mean crimes don't happen!
- **Keep your cell phone in your hand or pocket, not in your purse.** If your bag is stolen, you will still have access to emergency services.
- **If you are driving keep your doors locked, and windows up.** If you think you are being followed, don't drive home and show them where you live. Drive to a well lit street and on to a fire station or police station.
- **Keep your gas tank full.** You don't want to run out of gas at night or in unfamiliar territory.

## *ATM Safety*

- **Plan ahead!** If you plan ahead, the ATM machine gets less use. Never go in the evening, if possible. The guards usually have gone home.
- **If you have to go to an ATM,** use everything you learned about street safety and be aware of your surroundings. If it doesn't look right, forget it!
- **Use an ATM inside at the grocery store in the evening.** Do not, however, ignore all the other safety tips. You still have to walk to your car.
- **Never give your card or PIN number to anyone.** Your best friend now may not be your best friend in a year.

***Your best defense is a smart offense!***