



## Holiday Shopping Safety Tips

Shopping during the holiday season can present unique danger. Taking a few prevention measures can help keep your holiday season joyous.

The holiday season is a time when busy people can become careless and vulnerable to theft and other holiday crime. The following tips can help you be more careful, prepared and aware during the holiday season.

- Shop during daylight hours whenever possible. If you must shop at night, go with a friend or family member. Dress casually and comfortably. Avoid wearing expensive jewelry.
- Do not carry a purse or wallet, if possible.
- Always carry your Driver License or Identification Card along with necessary cash, checks and/or a credit card you expect to use.
- Even though you are rushed and thinking about a thousand things, stay alert to your surroundings.
- Avoid carrying large amounts of cash.
- Pay for purchases with a check or credit card when possible.
- Keep cash in your front pocket.
- Notify the credit card issuer immediately if your credit card is lost, stolen or misused.
- Keep a record of all of your credit card numbers in a safe place at home.
- Be extra careful if you do carry a wallet or purse. They are the prime targets of criminals in crowded shopping areas, transportation terminals, bus stops, on buses and other rapid transit.
- Avoid overloading yourself with packages. It is important to have clear visibility and freedom of motion to avoid mishaps.
- Beware of strangers approaching you for any reason. At this time of year, "con-artists" may try various methods of distracting you with the intention of taking your money or belongings. **There was an incident where a child distracted a shopper while the other child or mother was on the other side of the shopping cart stealing the victim's wallet.**

I like to keep my emergency siren keychain next to my bed. I've walked out of Meijer before and noticed a suspicious group of men by my car and after hitting the panic button they cleared. It's one of my favorite safety functions on my car.

Do not leave bags of purchases on your car seat. Put them in the trunk of your car or under the car seats and out of sight. Desperate criminals will break the windows and grab those bags.