

ANTI-CRIME HANDBOOK



REDUCING VIOLENT CRIME

Violent crime takes a terrible toll in life and property. Law enforcement officials routinely gather statistics about violent crime, but these statistics do not measure the grief, tragedy, and loss experienced by the victims.

Our nation has experienced a significant upturn in the incidence of violent crime in the past two years. Virtually no large city in the United States has escaped this problem. In 1990, Dallas experienced the highest number of murders in the city's history.

Experts attribute the rise in violent crime to factors such as the drug problem, gangs and the age of the population. While there is no doubt that these causes and others contribute to the violent crime rate, it is apparent that the violent crime rate is rising and that each of us must take measures to avoid becoming a victim.

The purpose of this section of the booklet is to provide suggestions and recommendations to help you avoid the trauma and pain of becoming a victim of violent crime. Although violent crime can exist in many forms, this section of the booklet will offer specific measures to prevent the major violent crimes of:

- **MURDER AND ASSAULT**
- **RAPE**
- **ROBBERY**

The primary goal of the Dallas Police Department is your safety, but we cannot reduce violent crime without your active cooperation. Programs such as Neighborhood Crime Watch need your help. These programs are operated by citizens like you who are concerned about crime and are taking an active role to prevent and report it. Together, we can reduce violent crime and make our city a safer place to live.

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PREVENT MURDER AND ASSAULT

Murder and assault victims usually know the suspect as a family member, a friend, or an acquaintance. Many times, one or both of the participants is intoxicated or under the influence of drugs.

In stranger-to-stranger offenses, murders often start as lesser crimes such as burglary or robbery. The victim may fight or in some other way resist the suspect who then kills the victim out of anger or fear. Other murders or assaults are the result of minor issues, such as a traffic altercation that turned violent because of irrational thinking, heated emotions, alcohol or drugs.

BE ALERT

Avoid high-crime areas, if possible.

If you must travel in these areas, remain alert to the people around you and your surroundings. Watch for strangers approaching you without, apparent reason.

Be courteous and discreet.

Be considerate of others, whether you're behind the wheel of your car or in a social or business situation.

Avoid arguments with strangers, especially individuals under the influence of drugs or alcohol. If you sense that an argument or confrontation is getting out of hand, walk away from it rather than antagonize the other party.

Remain calm and do not resist.

If you find yourself the victim of a robbery, or other serious crime, remain calm. If you panic, you increase the likelihood of violence.

Do not resist the suspect's efforts to take your property. No property, no matter how valuable, is worth your life.

****** CALL POLICE**

Call police. The dispatcher will send an officer and an ambulance to the scene. Do not touch or move anything. While waiting for the police, write down the license plate numbers of any vehicles you saw leaving the crime scene. Make a note of any suspicious persons seen leaving the area.

FOLLOW UP

In Dallas, if you have additional information on a particular homicide or assault, notify the Crimes Against Persons Division at 214-671-3584

PREVENT RAPE

Rape is not a sexual crime; It is an act of violence intended to injure and humiliate the victim. Rape victims include people of all ages, economic backgrounds and occupations

ALERT

Remember these special preventive measures outside. Most rapes occur outside, on the Street, in a parking lot, playground or schoolyard

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Be alert to your surroundings and the people around you when you're outside; particularly if you're alone or it's dark. Try these tips:

Stay in well-lighted areas as much as possible.

Walk confidently, directly, at a steady pace. A rapist looks for someone who appears vulnerable.

Walk on the side of the street facing traffic.

Walk close to the curb. Avoid doorways, bushes and alleys where rapists can hide.

At your home or apartment. Many rapes occur in the victim's home, in a garage or in an apartment laundry room.

Make sure all doors are sturdy. Entry doors should be solid core wood (at least 1 3/4 inches thick) or metal. Good locks, such as a deadbolt lock with a 1-inch throw, are a must. Don't rely on chain locks.

Make sure all windows can be locked securely.

Be sure the exterior of your home is well-lighted at night.

Move exterior door hinges to the interior or install non-removable hinge pins.

Install a wide-angle peephole for a full view outside the door.

Keep doors locked at all times.

Instruct children never to answer a doorbell or a knock at the door.

Put curtains or blinds on all windows and keep them closed at night.

When moving into a house or apartment, change or re-key all locks

If door keys have been lost, change locks or re-key immediately.

Do not hide door keys outside your home.

Avoid giving your house keys to anyone other than family members or trusted friends.

Know the neighbors you can trust in an emergency.

Use your initials rather than your first name in the phone book and on your mailbox.

If you hear a prowler inside your house or apartment, get out through a back door or window. Avoid any confrontations with the prowler.

When returning home, have your keys ready and enter the house or apartment as quickly as possible.

If you sense that something is not right, do not go into your home or apartment. Call the police.

If a stranger asks to use your phone, get the information and place the call for him. *Do not allow any stranger into your home.*

Never let it be known that you are home alone. Avoid going out alone at night.

Do not leave clubs or night spots with strangers or invite them to your apartment or home.

Ask your apartment manager to provide safeguards, such as deadbolt locks and peepholes in the door.

Be aware of what type of private security is provided at your apartment.

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Have the security company's telephone number handy and know what services are provided.

Visitors, Repair Persons and Delivery Personnel:

Most service company employees carry identification cards. If they do not have an ID, get their name and call the company they claim to represent before letting them in.

Never open your door to anyone you do not know. Always verify by telephone the company they say they represent and that they have been sent for the reason stated.

- Telephone Calls:

Do not give your name, phone number or address to a telephone caller.

Never give a caller any reason to think you are home alone.

Hang up on obscene or frightening phone calls. If they persist, blow a whistle loudly into the mouthpiece.

If threatening or obscene calls persist, report them to the phone company.

- Elevators:

Stand near the control panel

Familiarize yourself with the emergency buttons of the elevator.

Look inside the elevator to be certain no one is hiding inside before getting on.

Get off if someone suspicious enters.

If you are worried about someone who is waiting for the elevator with you pretend you forgot something and do not get on. Do not enter an elevator if there is a person on it of whom you are suspicious. Wait for the next elevator.

If you are attacked, push the alarm and as many floor buttons as possible.

- Walking:

Try not to overload yourself with packages.

Vary your daily routine.

Avoid walking alone at night

Walk only on busy, well-lighted streets

Do not walk through dark parking lots, parks or other dark places

Do not walk too closely to the inside of a sidewalk, near bushes, alley entrances, driveways or entrances to private places.

Carry a whistle.

If a car approaches and the driver bothers you, walk in the opposite direction.

If people ask you for directions from their car, do not walk over to them; make them speak louder.

If you think someone is following you, do not go home; go instead to a neighbor's house, open business or other well-lighted place where there should be people to help you.

If you arrive home by taxi or with friends, ask them to wait until you are inside your home

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Do not hitchhike or accept rides from strangers

• When Driving:

Keep your doors locked and windows rolled up at all times.

Be sure your house, garage and driveway are well-lighted.

Always check the back seat of your car before entering.

When you go out, be sure to let someone know your destination, route and expected time of return.

Keep your car properly maintained.

Use busy, well-lighted streets when possible.

Be sure you have 'enough gas to get to your location.

Leave your car in gear when you have to stop at intersections.

If you wish to help a stranded motorist, do not stop; go to the nearest telephone and call for help.

If you think you are being followed by another car, do not go home. Drive to the nearest police or fire station, open gasoline station, or other well-lighted place. Do not get out of your car; use your horn to summon help.

If your car breaks down in an isolated area, turn on the emergency flashers, raise your hood, get back in your car as quickly as possible, then lock your doors and keep the windows rolled up. If people stop, ask that they send help. Do not get out of your vehicle or accept rides from anyone.

If people try to force their way into your car, blow the horn. Always park in a well lighted, busy location.

If you park during the day and return at night, park near street and building lights when possible.

Stay alert and attuned to things going on around you. Do not leave your car if you observe any suspicious persons in the area.

Have your car key ready before you approach the car so you do not make yourself vulnerable while searching for the right key.

When parking in a valet lot, leave only your ignition key.

When you reach home, leave your lights on until you open the garage. Have your house key ready before you get out of the car.

CALL POLICE•

Report the crime as soon as possible by calling police. Recall as much as possible about the attacker.

Preserve all physical evidence. Do not take a bath, douche, wash or change clothes or linens. Do not touch anything handled by the attacker.

FOLLOW UP

In Dallas, if you have additional information, call the Crimes Against Persons Division at 671-3584.

If needed, request counseling or additional information from Victims Outreach (214) 233-5184 and the Dallas County Rape and Child Sexual Abuse Center (214) 653-8740.

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PREVENT ROBBERY

Robbery is a theft in which the offender intentionally, knowingly or recklessly injures another person, or the offender intentionally or knowingly threatens another person with imminent bodily injury or death.

Aggravated robbery is a robbery during which the victim is seriously injured or the offender displays or uses a deadly weapon.

. BE ALERT

Avoid poorly lighted areas.

Approximately 44% of robberies of individuals occur between 9PM and 3AM. If you find that you must walk in poorly lighted areas, walk purposefully. Communicate the message that you are calm, confident, and know what is going on around you. Make quick, but deliberate eye contact with people around you.

When walking to your vehicle, have your car keys in hand before starting across a parking lot.

Have your car key ready before you approach the car so you do not make yourself vulnerable while searching for the right key.

When driving, keep car doors locked at all times.

Keep the windows rolled up enough so that an arm cannot be inserted through the opening.

Avoid walking alone, and stay away from dark streets. Avoid short cuts through deserted areas.

Avoid displaying large amounts of cash or other tempting targets, such as jewelry.

Always park your car in well-lighted areas.

This will enable you to see your car and its surroundings from as far away as possible. Park as close to an open business as possible.

• Safe Banking

Don't keep large amounts of cash at home or in your possession. Establish a checking account. Most banks offer low-cost, economy checking for those who don't need to write a large number of checks.

Protect your deposit slips and check book. Never give anyone a deposit slip or blank check. Your deposit slip contains your account number and should never be used as a way to give someone your address and phone number. Never tell anyone your account number other than for legitimate business reasons. Your account number could allow someone access to your account.

Protect your bank statements. Either keep them or destroy them. Don't put them in the trash where someone might retrieve them later.

Never give out information about your bank account by telephone. Your bank will not call by phone to ask for information of this kind.

Exercise caution when going to and from your bank lobby. Stay alert and don't loiter. Don't openly carry cash or checks. Keep them concealed in your purse or pocket. Be cautious of strangers.

If you are victimized near your bank or on bank property, report it to the bank as well as to police.

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Have Social Security checks and other regularly recurring checks deposited directly into your bank account. Most banks are able to accept Social Security checks directly from the Social Security Administration. Check with your bank to determine what kinds of checks it will accept by direct deposit.

Check with your employer about having your payroll check deposited directly in your bank.

Use a safe deposit box to store valuable items such as jewelry and important documents. This provides protection against damage from fires and floods as well as from theft. The cost of a safe deposit box is usually only a few dollars a month.

- Automatic Teller Machine (ATM) and Night Deposit Safety

Protect the Personal Identification Number (PIN) you use with your ATM. Don't write it on your card. Stand directly in front of the ATM when you enter your number so no one can look over your shoulder.

Try to have another person accompany you when using your ATM or night deposit.

Be ready to conduct your transaction before you approach the ATM or night deposit. Conduct your business quickly and don't loiter in the vicinity.

At night, use an ATM or night deposit that is well-lighted.

Be observant when you use your ATM or night deposit. Be cautious of anyone who is loitering around your ATM or night deposit. Don't stop to talk to strangers. Leave quickly if you are approached while using your ATM or night deposit.

Put away your money as soon as you withdraw it from the ATM. Don't stand by the ATM and count your money. Don't openly carry money to your ATM or night deposit. Keep it concealed until you are ready to make the deposit.

Always take your receipt from the ATM. Do not leave it in the machine or lying on the ground nearby. The receipt shows your account number.

- During a Robbery:

Remember the following precautions:

Remain calm and listen to the robber's demands. If you panic, you increase the possibility of violence. Avoid making sudden movements.

Do not resist a robber's efforts to take your property.

Do not offer items that are not specifically requested.

Observe the suspect's physical description (i.e., sex, race, age and clothing worn.)

Without placing yourself in danger, attempt to notice the license plate number of the suspect's car, if one is seen.

= CALL POLICE

Go to a safe location as close as possible to the robbery scene and call police immediately.

Keep all witnesses at the scene until the police can interview them. If a witness has to leave, get a name, address and phone number.

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Don't touch or move any evidence.

Write down a complete description of the suspect, weapon, if any, and vehicle used.

List all property taken, along with serial numbers when possible.

= FOLLOW UP

In Dallas, call the Crimes Against Persons Division at 670-5146 and ask for the detective assigned to your case.

PREVENT HATE CRIME

Hate crimes are those offenses that are motivated by prejudice against the race, religion, ethnicity or sexual orientation of the victim. This includes threatening phone calls, hate mail, physical assaults, vandalism, cross burnings or destruction of other religious symbols and arson.

The Dallas Police Department takes a proactive role in promoting peace within the community and ensuring that rights guaranteed by State Law and the U.S Constitution are protected for all citizens regardless of race, color, sexual orientation, ethnicity or religion. All acts or threats of racial or religious violence are viewed as serious, and the investigations are given priority attention.

= CALL POLICE

To report a hate crime, call police. When the officer responding to your call determines that a hate crime has been committed, an offense report will be made.

= FOLLOW UP

The Dallas Police Department's Intelligence Division, as well as the division with primary investigative jurisdiction, receives a copy of each Hate Crime Offense Report. Personnel assigned to those divisions work in conjunction with officers in the Patrol Division area where the crime took place. In addition to investigating the crime, actions are taken to prevent any escalation or counter violence at a hate crime location.

REDUCING PROPERTY CRIMES

The number of theft and burglary crimes decreased by almost 9% in Dallas from 1989 to 1990. Although this is positive news, property crime still remains a problem. You can help prevent property crime by practicing many of the same methods already described to prevent violent crime.

Please read through these practical ways to reduce your chance of becoming a victim of property crime. Together, the citizen/police partnership can make our city a safer place for all of us.

PREVENT AUTO THEFT

Auto thefts in Dallas decreased by 10% in 1990. Reduce your chances of being a victim by following these tips:

= BE ALERT

Lock your car. Take your keys. Never hide a spare key on the vehicle. Roll up windows completely. Remove keys from ignition. Park in well-lighted areas. When parking in attended lots or parking garages, leave only the ignition key with the attendant. Park as close as possible to an open

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business. Do not leave valuables in sight to tempt a thief. Always park with the wheels turned toward the curb.

Back your car into the driveway. If you drive forward into the driveway, a car thief could raise the hood to hot wire the car, and it would appear to the neighbors that you were just working on the car.

If you have a garage, use it.

Lock your garage door.

When going out of town, if possible, remove the distributor cap or coil wire.

Never leave your car running while it is unattended.

CALL POLICE

Call police. In Dallas, your call will be transferred to the Expediter Unit in order for the information to be taken over the telephone. If you prefer, an officer will be dispatched to your location.

Vehicle theft should be reported as soon as possible. However, before the vehicle can be listed as stolen, you must have your vehicle's license number and/or the vehicle Identification number (sometimes called VIN).

After you phone in the necessary information, you may be asked to wait a short period of time for the Expediter Unit to call you back. An operator will take the report over the telephone. By making a report over the phone, the needed information about your vehicle can be directly entered into the Police Department's computer system. This enables officers to immediately identify your vehicle as being stolen.

= FOLLOW UP

If you recover your own vehicle, you must not touch or move your vehicle in order to preserve possible evidence. In Dallas, you should call 670-3022 to report the recovery. If you do not follow these steps, your car will continue to be listed as stolen.

PREVENT BURGLARY AND THEFT

A burglary is the act of entering a home or building, not open to the public, with the intent to commit a crime.

A theft has been committed if someone unlawfully obtains property with the intent to deprive the rightful owner of it.

.BE ALERT

Have you taken the proper action to prevent the possibility of becoming a victim?"

1. Keep doors and windows locked at all times.
2. If you move into a previously occupied house or apartment, change or re-key all locks. In some burglaries, entry is made with a key or an unlocked door. You've defeated the purpose of locks if you don't know where your keys are. If there's a chance that a former owner or tenant might still have a key, change or re-key the locks. When replacing locks, replace with a deadbolt lock.
3. Install deadbolt locks and metal strikes. Add a deadbolt lock has a should metal bar that covers the gap between a door and its frame. The word "dead" means that there are no springs to operate the

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bolt. When fully engaged, it cannot be pushed back with a credit card or any other flexible “shimming” device.. It must be manually locked (thrown) and unlocked (retracted).

If the door secured by the deadbolt lock has breakable glass within 40 inches of the lock, the lock must be key operated from both sides unless prohibited by life safety codes. When you’re in the house, keep the key for a deadbolt lock in a place where you can get to it quickly in case of fire.

It’s important that a reinforcing metal strike be used with the deadbolt lock. The strike should be anchored in the studs of the building so that the door cannot be kicked in.

Purchase only high-quality, name-brand locks. Consult professional locksmiths, and consider having them do the installation.

4. Install solid core or metal outside doors. Since most intruders enter a residence by physically destroying a door or door frame, strong -doors and frames, including your garage door, are essential to your security. Exterior doors must be metal or solid core wooden doors that are a minimum of 1 3/8 in thick. Steel doors and frames are harder to destroy than simple wooden doors and frames. If you have wooden doors and frames, you can increase your security by taking out the least possible amount of wood when installing any security device. Hollow core doors are not recommended.

5. Use a door peephole or view grill always acknowledge a caller at your door, but do not open it. Some burglars ring the doorbell, and if there is no answer, they break in. You do not want that type of surprise. A peephole with a 180 degree viewing angle is excellent for you to use to verify who is on the other side of your door.

Never open your door to anyone you do not know. Always verify by telephone that people work for the company they say they represent and have been sent for the reason stated.

6. Put supplementary locking devices on all windows. In many cases, entry is made through a window. Window locks that secure both the inside and outside frames can provide another effective means of thwarting the would-be burglar. ‘Windows can be secured by auxiliary locking devices such as screws, wooden dowels, pinning devices and key operated locks.

7. Install secondary locks on sliding glass doors. People often install sturdy locks on their front doors but leave sliding doors “wide open” to illegal entry. Usually, a sliding door is more secluded from public view than a front ‘door, making a perfect place for thieves to enter. One way to help increase your security is to install a bolt lock on your door to help stop the door from being slid or lifted off its track.

Remember, if you can keep burglars occupied for several minutes trying to get a door or window open, they’ll become frustrated and move on.

8. Always keep your garage closed and locked. A dead- bolt locks especially important here. Once inside the garage, a burglar can work uninterrupted at getting into the house. Your garage and its possessions are part of your home, too. Keeping it locked is just as important as keeping your home locked, especially if the garage is attached to the home.

Prevent Burglary And Theft (cont.)

9. when away for an extended period of time, cancel mail and suspend newspaper delivery. An accumulation of mail and newspapers is a sure sign that resident is not at home Arrange in advance to have a neighbor take in any papers, mail or free samples that may arrive while you’re gone.

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10. Have a trusted neighbor watch your home when you are away. The watchful eyes of your neighbors are some of the best crime prevention tools available. So many burglaries could be stopped or prevented if only more people would report suspicious happenings. Tell the neighbor who is watching your home where you'll be and how long you'll be gone. In case anything happens, the neighbor can make a prompt report to the police.

11. Be sure your home always looks "lived in." Leave some interior lights on when gone from home. A couple of timers set to turn your lights on and off automatically should be used. However, don't leave the lights on 24 hours a day. Lights burning night and day do not look natural. Set the timer so the lights are on until normal bedtime hours. Burglars are nervous about two-story homes that have lights burning on both floors

12. Do not leave a door key under a doormat, in a mailbox, or other outside locations where a burglar could easily find it. If you must leave a key behind, keep it with a trusted neighbor. Make sure that each member of your family knows where the key is

13 Do not give house keys to parking lot attendants.

Give the attendant your car ignition key only.

14. Do not carry an identification tag on your key ring.

This could allow a would be thief to easily identify your home or vehicle.

15. Do not leave ladders or tools outside your house where a burglar could use them to break into your home.

16 Keep doors and windows highly visible Outdoor, low-voltage lights with timer* and neatly-trimmed shrubs and foliage eliminate potential hiding place and allow neighbors and police to see and report any suspicious activity.

17. Engrave your driver's license number on all valuables. By marking your valuables, they can be more easily traced back to you in case of theft. Using an easily identifiable number, such as your driver's license number and state abbreviation, can assist police in tracking down the owner of recovered property. Do not use your Social Security number, as it is difficult to verify.

18. Do not give out information o the phone to anyone you do not personally know.

19. Be suspicious of anyone you do not know who asks about your schedule and plans.

CALL POLICE

Call 9-1-1. The operator may forward your call to the Department's Expediter Unit to take the information If you request it, an officer will be dispatched to your location.

Do not disturb anything at the scene.

• Collecting Evidence and Making the Report

The investigating officer will collect evidence and prepare a report. The officer will ask the victim to make an inventory to determine what was taken. (Avoid touching or disturbing anything until the officer has arrived and collected evidence.)

Officer's Investigation

The investigating officer will conduct an investigation and ask questions such as the following:

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1. What time did you leave the house?
2. What time did you return?
3. What did you see when you returned?
4. Where was the stolen property located?
5. Have you talked with any of your neighbors?
6. If you have, what did they tell you they saw or heard?
7. Are you willing to prosecute the guilty parties?

Documenting the Loss

To document any further property loss discovered after the officer has left the scene, victims in Dallas have the following options:

Additional information may be provided by calling the Patrol Division nearest your home. Please have readily available the service number of your offense that was given to you when the initial report of the crime was made.

If more than ten days have elapsed since the crime occurred, go to the Patrol Division nearest your home (see list on page 26) to obtain an "Add Loss Form." It should be completed, notarized and mailed back to the Patrol Division station. Should any further information regarding your case become available, please contact the Patrol Division and the detective in their Investigative Unit who is handling your case will be informed of it.

= FOLLOW UP

Victims in Dallas will be contacted by telephone or mail to inform them of the detective who is in charge of investigating their case. However, only a small percentage of all burglary and theft cases have follow investigations, since most crimes involving loss of property do not have sufficient evidence (like witnesses, suspects, traceable evidence).

To Obtain Information About Your Case

In Dallas, call the Patrol Division nearest your home. Please have your service number ready.

Notification of Victim About Case Outcome

If your case is cleared by an arrest of the suspect, you will be notified of it by mail. It will be noted on the card you receive if any of your property was recovered at the time.