



Personal Security -- At Home, On the Street, While Travelling

Introduction

The most serious obstacle to personal safety is an attitude of complacency or fatalism. "It can't happen to me" and "if it's going to happen, it's going to happen" is dangerous thinking.

Recent political events throughout the world have changed--but not necessarily diminished--the threats you face. Today, the most prevalent threat you face is crime.

A criminal attack against you or your family can take place *at any location*, as can a fire or other disaster.

However, you can influence what happens to you by assuming greater responsibility for your own security.

Residential Security

Residential security is a critical component of any personal security program. The following guidelines should be used in reviewing your residential security:

Contract M₂D technology equipped professional Security Guards instead of employing a watchman.

All entrances, including service doors and gates, should have quality locks--preferably deadbolt. Check your:

- Front Door
- Rear Door
- Garage Door(s)
- Service Door(s)
- Patio Door
- Sliding Glass Door
- Gate
- Swimming Pool Gate
- Guest House Door(s).

Don't leave keys "hidden" outside the home. Leave an extra key with a trusted neighbour or colleague.

Keep doors locked even when you or family members are at home.

Have window locks installed on all windows. Use them.

Lock louvered windows--especially on the ground floor.

Have locks installed on your fuse boxes and external power sources.

If you have window grilles and bars, review fire safety. Don't block bedroom windows with permanent grilles if the windows may be used for emergency egress.

If you have burglar or intrusion alarms, check and use them.



M₂D Safety and Security Recommendations



Keep at least one fire extinguisher on each floor, and be sure to keep one in the kitchen. Show family members and household help how to use them.

Install and periodically check smoke detectors and replace batteries when necessary.

Keep flashlights in several areas in the house. Check the batteries often, especially if you have children in your home. (They love to play with flashlights!)

A family dog can be a deterrent to criminals. But remember, even the best watch-dog can be controlled by food or poison. Do not install separate "doggy doors" or entrances. They also can admit small intruders.

Choose a location that offers the most security. The less remote, the safer your home will be, particularly in a neighbourhood close to police and fire protection.

Know your neighbours. Develop a rapport with them and offer to keep an eye on each other's homes, especially during trips.

If you observe any unusual activity, report it immediately to M₂D.

Establish safe family living patterns. If you understand the importance of your contribution to the family's overall security, the entire household will be safer.

While at home, you and your family should rehearse safety drills and be aware of procedures to escape danger and get help.

Educate family members and domestic help in the proper way to answer the telephone at home.

Vary daily routines; avoid predictable patterns.

Know where all family members are at all times.

Establishing a Safehaven

Follow three basic steps in setting up a safe-haven in your home:

1. Designate an internal room;
2. Install a two-way communications system or telephone; and
3. Furnish the safehaven with an emergency kit.

It is highly unlikely you would spend more than a few hours in a safehaven; however, the supplies listed below are suggested for your maximum safety. M₂D can tell you more about how to select and secure your safehaven.

The following is a checklist of possible safehaven supplies.

- Smartphone with spare batteries and remote charger
- Fire extinguisher
- Fresh water
- Candles, matches, flashlight
- Extra batteries



M₂D Safety and Security Recommendations



Home Security While You Are Away

If an M₂D client, notify us of your departure and return dates but don't otherwise publicize your travel or vacation plans. Leave contact numbers with the M₂D Client Care Team. M₂D will check your residence periodically, check the residence is secure and ensure your timers and lights are working.

Secure your home. Close and lock all windows and doors. Don't forget to lock garage or gate doors.

Consider purchasing timers to turn on outside and inside lights automatically at various times throughout the night.

Check outside lighting and replace older light bulbs. You don't want a light burning out while you are away.

The decision to set the automated alarm system may vary from region to region. Power outages and brownouts may trip alarm systems. Check with your supplier for advice on setting alarm systems when you are away for long periods of time.

Unplug all unnecessary appliances such as televisions, stereos, and personal computers.

If you use a telephone answering machine, turn off the ringer on the telephone. If you don't have an answering machine, unplug or turn off ringers on all telephones.

Lock all jewelry, important papers, currency, and other valuable portables in a safe place such as a safe deposit box or home safe.

Ensure all personal and home insurance policies are up-to-date and that your coverage is adequate.

Personal Security While Traveling

Sit near other people or near aisles or doors. Learn the location of emergency alarms and exits.

Stay awake and alert when using public transportation.

Keep valuables out of sight and luggage close at hand. If carrying a handbag, keep it in front of you, closed, with the fastening toward your body. Keep a wallet in your front pants pocket.

Let go if your bag is snatched.

When traveling, dress casually; dress down where appropriate. Be aware of local customs.

Don't wear excess jewelry. Reduce wallet and purse contents.

At airports, proceed through security checks and go to the boarding area as quickly as possible. These areas are usually the most secure in the airport.



M₂D Safety and Security Recommendations



In any crowded situation, be aware of any crowding or jostling, even if it appears innocent. This is often a ploy by pickpockets to distract you.

Do not share a local taxi. As an M₂D client, contact us if you need a private cab.

Personal Security in Hotels

Do not discuss your business or travel plans in public areas where they may be overheard. Discuss your travel plans and movements during your stay with as few people as possible.

Selecting a hotel room on the third to fifth floor generally will keep you out of reach of criminal activity from the street.

Do not entertain strangers in your hotel room.

Be alert to overly friendly locals who may have criminal intentions. They may offer to take you to a "special" restaurant. Their ruse may be to offer drugged refreshments.

Never leave valuables in your hotel room exposed or unattended, even in a locked suitcase.

Place valuables in a hotel safe deposit box or room safe.

Familiarize yourself with escape routes in case of fire or other catastrophe.

Use the door chain or bolt lock whenever you are in your room.

Use the door viewer (peephole) before opening the door to visitors.

Do not discuss your room number while standing in the lobby or leave your room key on restaurant or bar tables.

Keep your room neat so you will notice disturbed or missing items quickly.

Fire Safety at Home

Three vital facts you should know about fire:

1. It isn't usually fire that kills; it is the products of combustion--smoke, toxic gases, or superheated air.
2. Fire travels at lightning speed--up to 19 feet per second.
3. The critical hours for a house fire are 11 PM to 6 AM when most people are asleep.

This means you need to detect fire early, and you must move quickly when you do. You and your family can avoid becoming a statistic if you:

- Install smoke detectors in your home.
- Create and practice a fire escape plan.
- Take fire preventive measures such as the following:



M₂D Safety and Security Recommendations



Smoke Detectors

A smoke detector can mean the difference between life and death. They are inexpensive and are battery operated; they are not at the mercy of sporadic electrical service. You should have one on every level of your home, particularly in the hallway outside bedrooms. Test your detectors regularly, and replace the batteries as needed--usually twice a year.

Exit Drills

You and your family should create a fire exit plan together. Learn how to escape the house from every room. Locate two exits from each bedroom. Designate a meeting place outside the house. Most importantly--especially if you have children--PRACTICE YOUR PLAN!

Preventive Measures

Carelessness with cigarettes is the most frequent cause of house fires. Never smoke in bed!

Open flames and the resulting sparks are dangerous. Don't place barbecue grills or other open flames on the balcony (or be extra alert) or near the house.

Check for: faulty electrical wiring; overloaded circuits; faulty equipment, including cooking and heating appliances; leaking propane tanks; overloaded or frayed extension cords; dirty chimneys and vents; and flammable liquids.

Keep a fire extinguisher in the house, preferably one on every level but particularly in the kitchen. Teach older children and household help how to use the extinguisher.

Security Do's for Children

Teach children never to admit strangers into the home.

Teach children to use the M₂D alert system and M₂D emergency phone numbers. If not an M₂D client, teach them the local emergency phone numbers,

Make sure younger children know their name, address, and phone number.

Caution teenagers about "blind dates" or meeting anyone they do not know.

Teach young children how to answer the telephone so that they do not give out personal information, such as home address, absence of adults, etc.

Teach children how to say no to strangers.

Teach children how to exit the house in case of emergency.

Carjacking

When in your car, always keep the doors locked. Any time you drive through areas containing stoplights, stop signs, or anything that significantly reduces vehicular speed, keep your windows up.



M₂D Safety and Security Recommendations



Leave ample maneuvering space between your vehicle and the one in front of you. If you are approached by suspicious persons while you are stopped, do not roll down windows; drive away quickly.

If you are being followed or harassed by another driver, try to find the nearest police station, hotel, or other public facility. Once you find a place of safety, don't worry about using a legal parking space. Park as close as you can, get inside fast and call M₂D.

If another driver tries to force you to pull over or to cut you off, keep driving and try to get away. Try to note the license plate number of the car and a description of the car and driver. If this effort places you in danger, don't do it. The information is not as important as your safety.

If you are being followed, never lead the person back to your home or stop and get out. Drive to the nearest police station or public facility. You can verify surveillance by going completely around an arbitrarily chosen block.

If you are traveling alone and a car "bumps" into you, don't stop to exchange accident information. Go to the nearest service station or other public place to call the M₂D.

When you park, look for a spot that offers good lighting and is close to a location where there are a lot of people. Lock valuables in the trunk, and lock all doors.

Extra precautions are necessary when shopping. If you take packages out to lock them in your trunk, then plan to return to the stores to do more shopping, it may be a good idea to move your car to another section of the parking lot or street. The criminal knows that you will be coming back and can wait to ambush you. By moving your car, you give the impression you're leaving. If you think you are being followed, do not go back to your car. Return to the safety of the occupied shopping area or office building and contact M₂D.

If you have car trouble on the road, raise your hood. If you have a radio antenna, place a handkerchief or other flag there. When people stop to help, don't get out of the car unless you know them or it's the police or M₂D.

If you are in a parking lot or parked on the street and have trouble, be wary of personal assistance from strangers – call M₂D. If you feel threatened by the presence of nearby strangers, lock yourself in your car and blow the horn to attract attention of others.

By using these basic safety tips and your own common sense, you can help protect yourself.

Sexual Assault Prevention

Be alert. Don't assume that you are always safe. Think about your safety everywhere. Your best protection is avoiding dangerous situations.

Trust your instincts. If you feel uncomfortable in any situation, leave.

Always walk, drive, and park your car in well-lit areas.

Walk confidently at a steady pace on the side of the street facing traffic.



M₂D Safety and Security Recommendations



Walk close to the curb. Avoid doorways, bushes, and alleys.

Wear clothes and shoes that allow freedom of movement.

Walk to your car with keys in your hand.

If you have car trouble, raise the hood, stay inside your car with doors locked and windows closed. Alert M2D.

Make sure all windows and doors in your home are locked, especially if you are home alone.

Never give the impression that you are home alone if strangers telephone or come to the door.

If you come home and find a door or window open or signs of forced entry, don't go in – alert M₂D.

wherever, whatever
you need to be able to summon help
M₂D