

Advice on how
to stay safe
when you are in
public

Safety Tips

Street Safety

Although you can't predict when violence may occur, and neither should you be in a state of fear when you go out, there are some strategies you can adopt to try to minimise the chances of being attacked or abused by a stranger.

Awareness on the streets

Take note of your surroundings, and of the people around you. If there are choices about where to walk, always choose well-lit, populated areas and stay near to main roads, avoiding lonely short-cuts at night. Move away from groups of people behaving in an erratic or provocative manner. Cross the street, change direction, grab a taxi cab if you think there is danger. Try not to draw attention to yourself.

Appear confident

Walk with your head up and in a determined manner, and look like you know where you are going, even if you don't. If you feel nervous, or alone, tell yourself you can cope with any situation, and that you have as much right to be walking the streets as anyone else. Making eye contact with people as you go past them indicates you are not scared.

Stay with others

If you can, when travelling at night be with others for as much of your journey as possible. If you are left alone on top of a bus, or in an empty tube or train carriage, move as soon as you can to where there are other people, or get off if you feel it might be safer to do so. If you can afford it, get cabs for lonely journeys.

Alcohol or drugs make you more vulnerable

If you are out of it, you are more vulnerable to attack. Try to plan beforehand, if you know you will be drinking or taking drugs, to travel with friends or to avoid difficult or isolated journeys, either by staying with a friend or by booking a cab. Booking a minicab beforehand is safer than getting into one of the many cars that hang around nightclubs that might not be genuine cabs.

Avoid conflict

If a situation looks like it might turn violent, try not to engage or 'fight your corner' if you are outnumbered. Try to calm the situation down or look instead for ways of getting out of the situation. There is no shame in refusing to fight or trying to get away, especially if the odds are against you.



call or text our
helpline on
020 7704 2040 or
visit our website
www.galop.org.uk

If you are attacked

Hopefully this will never happen to you, but if you are attacked, you may decide to fight back, but try to get help and attention. Shout to bring others to your assistance. Sometimes shouting 'Fire!' will bring people more quickly. If your attacker has a weapon, try to run. Get help as soon as you can. See our What To Do Following An Incident factsheet for further advice.

Stay safe when trying to pull

When you meet a stranger you want to leave a club or bar with, try to introduce them to a friend before you leave, or let someone you know, maybe a barman or doorman, know you are leaving together. If you live alone and are taking them home, mention that you have a flat mate who is probably in (or a friend sleeping on your sofa) – even if you don't. Someone who intends robbing or harming you may be deterred if they think you have company.

If going to a stranger's place, think about getting their address before you go and leave it with a friend. Use your judgement and trust your instincts.

Again, your judgement may be impaired if you are drunk/have taken drugs.

Safety on the internet/when using personal ads

Meeting people via personals and on the Internet is becoming more and more popular, and however much fun you might be having, it's worth having a few basic safety strategies.

People can lie! People may not be who they say they are, and you won't know for sure until you meet them. Suss them out: Chat as much as you can to someone before meeting – ask him or her about themselves, find out as much as you can. If they are reluctant to give any info, think carefully about them.

Meet in public: if you meet them, do so in public the first time. Insist in meeting in a bar, café, or somewhere public. Then you can check them out for real. Avoid inviting them round or going to their home before meeting them first, even for a short while, so you can trust your instincts better.

Tell someone: not always possible, we know, especially if you're not out, but try to leave some indication of where you are going with someone you trust.

The information contained in this factsheet should only be used for guidance. While Galop has made every effort to make sure that it is correct and up-to-date, we would advise you always to seek further advice before making any decisions or taking action.

This factsheet aims to provide general advice, but you should always remember that factors, such as age, sexual orientation, sex, race, gender, religion, or disability, may make a difference to individual situations.

CRIMINAL INJURIES:
If you have experienced a violent crime you may be entitled to compensation. For further details on this you should visit the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority (CICA) at <https://www.cica.gov.uk>. If you are having difficulties, Galop may be able to assist you in completing any forms necessary to make a claim.

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