

# An Garda Síochána

## Crime Prevention Information Sheet



# Personal Safety

## “Streetwise”



### Get “Streetwise”

Crime can happen to anyone, anytime, anywhere. The culprits think they won't get caught and the victim thinks it won't be me! The reality is very different. For every crime there is always a victim. **Not every culprit will get caught but every victim will suffer.** This information leaflet is designed to reduce your risk of injury and/or loss from crime in Public Places.

The extent of your suffering or loss will depend on three key factors:

- Your Vulnerability
- Your Environment
- Your Individual Behaviour

### Your Vulnerability

Understanding your individual potential to becoming a crime victim must be approached from the mindset of the criminal. They will judge or rate your vulnerability in a number of ways and some factors will outweigh others for them depending on the type of crime being contemplated.

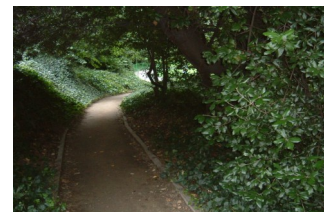
If you are:-

- A Man or a Woman
- Old or Young
- Able bodied or disabled
- Alone or in Company
- A Local or a Stranger
- Confident or Timid

then one or more of the above can increase or decrease your potential victimisation. Some are outside your control, others are not. What's important is to remember that each one can affect your risk category.

### Your Environment

Some areas are more prone to crime than others. Busy shopping thoroughfares with many people will always attract thieves. Likewise, quiet and poorly illuminated streets, underpasses and laneways may be the ideal place for muggers and robbers to strike.



Many night-time random assaults and acts of violence occur at predictable flash points such as queues, outside licensed premises, fast food restaurants, and night-clubs.

You should always instinctively prepare for the environment you may visit by asking yourself some basic questions:

- Do I know how to get there?
- Will I need to travel through potential trouble spots and can I avoid them?
- Do I need to go alone and do I need to go by day or night?
- What is my mode of travel and how long should the journey take?
- If I am using my private car - where can I park safely and what contingency plans do I have if I break down?
- Do I know anything about the place I am visiting - is it safe and well managed?

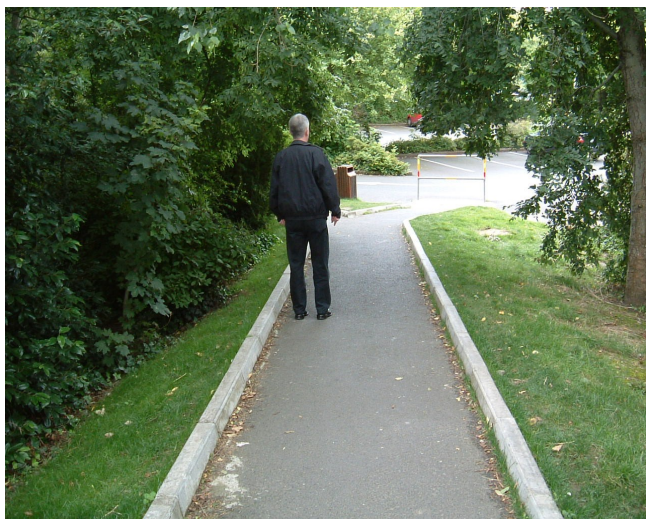


FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON THIS OR OTHER CRIME PREVENTION ISSUES,  
PLEASE CONTACT  
your local GARDÁ CRIME PREVENTION OFFICER  
or  
visit the Garda website at [www.garda.ie](http://www.garda.ie)

- Have I told anyone where I am going and what time I expect to return?
- Do I need to wear expensive items of jewellery or carry all my credit or laser money cards?
- What other items are in my possession that may be attractive to thieves – do I really need to bring them?

### Your Individual Behaviour

What **we are able to control** when in the public domain is **our own individual behaviour**. Some people are naturally confrontational and aggressive; others can remain calm and controlled even in the most provocative situations. Your ability to anticipate potential trouble and minimise or diffuse it can depend on your individual personality and your own behaviour. Becoming “streetwise” is a learning experience; however we should all observe some basic principles in avoiding trouble and the trouble maker.



### Observation and Confidence

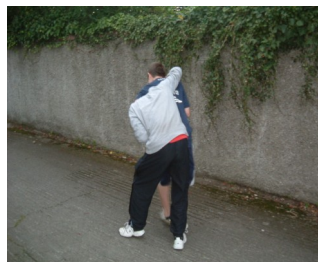
When walking in public do so in a confident and prompt manner. A thief or an attacker will seek out the most vulnerable target. When you are in public be observant. Look around you and be wary of strangers whether they are on their own or in groups. Note the nearest public building or place of safety. If you are not sure about your surroundings go back to where you came from and seek a trusted companion to accompany you to your destination. Trust your instincts, avoid confrontation and if something is not quite right, go to a safe place straight away.

### Plan your journey

Plan how you are going to get there and how you are going to return. Let people know where you are going and how long you should be. Let your friends know if you are leaving with someone outside of the group.

### Get off your phone

The number one target for the street thief is your mobile phone. Avoid making or taking calls in public. If your phone does ring try and answer it in a public building rather than on the street. Keep your mobile phone safely on your person and out of view.



### Wallets, Purses & Valuables

Conceal your wallet or purse. Carry only as much cash and cards necessary for your day's business. Keep a separate amount of cash on your person in case your wallet or purse is stolen. Do not struggle with the thief; you may injure yourself in the process. If you are wearing expensive or sentimental jewellery avoid walking in public, get a lift to and from your destination.

### Choose well lit locations

Avoid darkly lit places for walking or parking. Keep your car locked at all times when travelling through places unknown to you. Avoid leaving valuables clearly on display in cars. If you need to travel through a poorly lit area do not do so alone. If you are in a group, be conscious that you could be causing anxiety for persons walking on their own.

If you have been attacked report it to Gardaí immediately. Try to recall as much information as possible about the incident. Tell a friend or family member.

### Using public transport & taxis

Avoid waiting alone at bus stops and on train platforms. If possible sit where the driver can see you on public transport. Avoid sitting in an empty carriage on trains / trams. Check the time of the last train, bus or tram back to your accommodation. Always use a licensed taxi

If you are the victim of crime or violence - report the matter to the Gardaí immediately - **do not** take it upon yourself to deal with the assailants

**The advice contained in this information sheet is not intended to be exhaustive or absolute.**

**Nothing contained in this publication should be interpreted as mandatory, obligatory or designed to conflict with any statutory regulations.**

### Useful Contacts and Links

**Garda National Crime Prevention Unit,  
Garda H.Q., Harcourt Square, Dublin 2.  
Tel: (01) 6663362, Fax: (01) 6663314  
Email: [crime\\_prevention@garda.ie](mailto:crime_prevention@garda.ie)**

**An Garda Síochána – 999 / 112 [www.garda.ie](http://www.garda.ie)  
Garda Confidential Number 1800 666 111**

**Crime Victims Helpline - 116 006  
Dublin Rape Crisis Centre - (01) 661 4911**