

Safety when walking

Feeling confident when you are out in the street, in a car or on public transport is vital to mobility and enjoying community life and recreational activities. This Fact Sheet covers a range of sensible strategies that will help to make your outings safe and enjoyable.

To feel secure when you're out and about, choose common sense tips that suit your lifestyle and budget - and that you have the ability to use comfortably.

For example, a personal security alarm or whistle may help you feel safe and confident. Such devices make a loud noise when used, and in an emergency may deter criminals and attract the attention of people around you.

Be careful however, personal alarms may cause hearing damage. If you need to use one, make sure you hold it away from you, and other people.

Before leaving home, take time to lock up carefully.

- Take only what you need with you.
- Arrange for family and friends to go with you.
- Take your dog along.
- Avoid short-cuts through parks or vacant land, especially at night.
- Use busy, well-lit streets.
- If it is necessary to use poorly lit streets, walk as far from doorways as possible.
- If you think you are being followed or in danger of being confronted:
 - cross the street; or
 - try to get the attention of people nearby - shout as loudly as you can ('Help!'/ 'Fire!'); or
 - seek help at the nearest house, shop or busy public place.

- If you are confronted by someone who is trying to take your bag, GIVE IT TO THEM. This may go against all your instincts, but remember that no amount of money or inconvenience is worth personal injury.
- At the same time, take note of what the offender looks like and, if a vehicle is involved, take note of its registration number and call the police.
- Always carry a mobile phone or change for a telephone call. Always carry identity information with you, especially if you have a medical condition.
- Consider carrying a personal safety device, like a personal alarm or whistle.

At Night

- Be seen - wear something reflective like a wristband, shoes, a jacket or backpack with a reflective strip.
- Wear light coloured clothing.
- When using shared pathways, wear a flashing light to increase your visibility.
- Walk in well-lit areas.
- Be safe - walk with someone else and where other people can see you.

Walking in the sun and heat

- Avoid walking in the hottest part of the day - mornings and evenings are the best times to walk.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Wear a broad-brimmed hat, sunscreen, comfortable shoes, sunglasses and protective clothing.

This information was extracted from Queensland Police Older Wiser Safer brochure 10 March 2020