



Topic: Personal Safety

When we think of dangerous places, dark alleys or lonely streets come to mind. These locations are dangerous, but places where we spend much of our time can be just as dangerous. We may presume that we are safe in homes, at work, and in our own cars -- but this is not always true.

+ **In your home:** Doors should be kept locked even during the day. In his book *Strong on Defense*, retired police officer Sanford Strong says that more burglaries occur in the daytime than at night. A dog is the most effective alarm you can have.

+ **At your job:** If you are working after others leave the building, be sure the door is locked. Check with security to be assured that strangers can't enter the building. When you work in a room without a telephone, like a classroom or storeroom, have a cell phone with you.



+ **Parking lots and garages:** Park as close to the entrance as possible. Women could keep "male props" in the car, says Strong, like a baseball cap or men's tennis shoes. The props discourage attackers who are looking for a lone woman. If you have a bad feeling about people standing near your car, ask a security guard or a fellow employee to walk to the car with you. When returning to your car, have your keys ready so you can enter immediately, then lock the doors.

+ **On walking and bike trails:** They are usually quiet and beautiful, but it's still safer to go in pairs. Wearing headphones keeps you from hearing sounds which may be essential to your safety. You may think you can quickly pedal away from an undesirable encounter with a stranger, but bikes are easily knocked down. Ride with a friend, and don't wear stereo headphones.