

CRIME PREVENTION

Campus safety is everyone's responsibility. It is important that we all take our personal safety seriously. Below are some tips for reducing your chance of being a victim of crime.

Three Simple Rules for Personal Safety

- 1.** Stay alert and tuned into your surroundings. Be aware and be prepared.
- 2.** Stand tall and walk confidently; do not show fear. Do not look like a victim.
- 3.** Trust your instincts. If you do not feel comfortable in a place or situation, leave.

Protecting Your Property

- Use a combination padlock on all storage units. Check the unit periodically to make sure nothing has been disturbed.
- Don't mark your key chain with your name, address and/or license number. Lost keys can lead to theft. Take care of keys; don't give anyone the chance to duplicate them.
- Engrave all valuable personal property with your name and a unique number known only to you. Keep a detailed list of all valuables and serial numbers. Keep a copy of this list at your permanent residence as a backup.
- Move valuables out of view from windows and doors.
- Lock your vehicle and residence at all times, even when you're in them.
- Copy all important papers and cards that you carry in your purse or wallet, including your driver's license. Keep copies in a safe place. The information will be invaluable if anything is stolen or lost.
- Copy your vehicle ID and tag number. If your vehicle is stolen, it cannot be entered into the nationwide law enforcement network without this information.

Protecting Yourself at Home

- Keep doors and windows locked at all times, even if you are only away for a few minutes. Do not "prop open" doors in residence halls.
- Be assertive and demand that any unwanted person in your residence leave, or leave yourself. Anyone who refuses to leave is a trespasser. If you live in a women's residence hall, report any unescorted males to security (334-844-8888).
- Make sure hallways, entrances, garages, and grounds are well lit. Leave porch lights on all night. Keep blinds and curtains shut after dark and never dress in front of a window.
- When you expect to return after dark, leave an interior light on with the shades drawn. If you live on campus, report any malfunctioning light to Facilities Management at 334-844-HELP (4357). Make sure to provide a detailed location and description of the problem.
- Know who is at your door before you open it. Campus staff members carry identification, and solicitors are not allowed on campus. Require proper identification from any repair or utility personnel. If you live off campus, install a peephole in your front door.
- Do not open your door to strangers or let them in. If they need assistance and ask to use your phone, make the phone call for them.
- List initials and last names only on your mailbox or door and in the telephone book. Don't leave your name on your door or answering machine if you live alone.

- If you are going out of town, do not state you are away or when you will return on your voice mail recording, email automated reply, or social media networks.
- Get to know your neighbors. If you live off campus, join a neighborhood watch system and share information on suspicious circumstances.
- When you go home on breaks, have someone pick up your mail, newspaper, etc. Install timers and leave on all outside lights. Make your residence appear “lived in.”
- If you come home and see a broken window or jimmied door, don’t go inside. Confronting a burglar can be dangerous. Phone the police immediately at 911.

Protecting Yourself Away from Home

- Walk or jog with a friend. Avoid jogging after dark. If you must jog at night, stay in well-lit and well-traveled areas and do not go alone.
- Carry a whistle and don’t hesitate to use it to alert others you need help. Vary your pattern frequently.
- Don’t wear headphones when jogging or biking. They significantly reduce your ability to hear and thus your awareness.
- Tell someone where you are going and when you will return.
- Don’t fight back if your purse or wallet is snatched. Throw it in one direction and run in the other rather than risk personal injury. Call the police immediately at 911.
- Be careful when and where you patronize ATM machines. Accessing ATM cash machines in remote locations, particularly at night, could increase your risk of robbery and personal injury. While you are standing at the machine, keep turning around and scanning for people approaching you or loitering around.
- Avoid working or studying alone in a building other than your residence at night.
- Stand and walk tall with a brisk, purposeful stride. Make brief eye contact with someone who makes you feel uneasy to let them know that you see them and are not afraid, but don’t stare.
- Trust your instincts.

Protecting Yourself in Your Car

- Check the back seat before entering.
- Keep vehicle doors locked at all times, even when driving in daylight, so no one can jump in at a red light.
- Be suspicious of people approaching your car asking for directions, or change, or handing out flyers.
- When stopping in traffic, leave enough distance between your car and the car in front of you, so you can quickly pull away if necessary.
- Keep enough gas in your tank for emergencies.
- Don’t offer rides to anyone you don’t know, even if he or she claims to be a student.
- Honk your horn if someone suspicious approaches your vehicle.
- If your car breaks down, lift the hood, put on flashers, and wait for help inside the car with the doors locked. Ask people who stop to call the police or AAA. Don’t go with anyone.
- Don’t stop for stranded motorists. You are of greater help to them by calling the police.
- Keep valuables in the trunk or glove box of your vehicle, not on the seats.
- Park your car in well-lit areas.
- Remove all keys from your vehicle. Thieves look for keys under fenders and in magnetic key cases. Walk with your keys in your hand so that you don’t have to focus your attention on finding them in a backpack, bag or purse.
- Remember to buckle up. It’s the law in Alabama.

Protecting Yourself at Work

- Avoid working or studying alone in a building at night.
- When working late, make sure doors are locked.
- Keep your purse in a locked cabinet or drawer. Never leave it on or underneath a desk.
- Avoid using stairs in remote sections of the building.
- Do not hold the door open for strangers after normal business hours.
- Ask people you don't recognize if you can help them.
- Report suspicious activity to police (911 for emergencies; 334-501-3102 for non-emergencies).
- Be careful what you leave on your desk and on your computer screen when you step away from your desk.
- Keep passwords in secure places.

Have a Plan

It is very important for you to have a plan if an attacker tries to steal your bag, attack you from behind, or your car breaks down at night, etc. Knowing how you would handle situations if you should ever have to face an attacker could save your life. Always be on your guard, pay attention to your surroundings, trust your instincts and report suspicious activity to the police.

If you have a cell phone, keep it with you at all times so you can call for help if needed. There are also approximately 150 blue light emergency phones on campus, mainly in parking lots, parking garages, and pedestrian walkways. When you press the red button, the emergency phone will dial 911 and tell the emergency dispatcher your location.