



Holiday Safety Information

*"Don't Let the Grinch Steal Your
Holidays!"*

**Cambridge Police Department
125 Sixth Street
Cambridge, MA 02142**

**Community Relations Unit
(617) 349-3236**

www.cambridgepolice.org

Shopping Mall Safety Tips

- When shopping at the malls try to park in a well lit area or by a light pole. This extra lighting will make it easier for you to detect a suspicious person standing around your motor vehicle. If you get an uneasy feeling about someone standing by your motor vehicle, go back to the mall and alert security about the suspicious person.
- When shopping at the mall, try not to leave your purse unattended in a shopping cart for any length of time. Always take it with you and have it within your control.
- When dining out, try to avoid putting your purse on the back of your chair. Someone may bump the back of your chair and your purse could be gone within seconds. Try to put your purse on the floor in-between your feet with one strap looped around the leg of your chair. This will give you some control over who has access to your purse. An experienced “Grinch” can steal your purse in the blink of an eye.
- When making holiday purchases, never flash large amounts of money. This is certain to get the attention of a “Grinch.”
- Most malls have security personnel, alert them if you detect a suspicious person hanging around the mall.



Car Safety Tips

- Know the area you travel. Analyze your routes and note where you must frequently stop and wait. Know where “safe havens” are located.
- If you are going to a mall or to a store that you have never been to before, call ahead for accurate directions.
- When stopped at a traffic light, leave enough space between your car and the car ahead for a quick departure.
- Make sure all of your car doors are locked when you get into the motor vehicle.
- If you are approached by a suspicious person while in your vehicle, sound your horn to attract attention to yourself.
- NEVER LEAVE YOUR VALUABLES EXPOSED IN YOUR CAR.
- After you have been holiday shopping, try not to leave packages exposed in the backseat of your motor vehicle while it is unattended. If you must leave valuables in your car, place them in the trunk. Remember the old adage “out of sight, out of mind.” If you have a station wagon, van or pick-up truck, place your valuables on the floor and cover them with a blanket.
- Try not to leave your valuables in the trunk of your car for an extended period of time. Remove items from your trunk as soon as you get home. A “Grinch” may be waiting for an opportunity to do his/her holiday shopping from the trunk of your vehicle.

Credit Card Safety Tips

- Credit cards are convenient, but, unfortunately, if your cards are lost or stolen, they can end up providing conveniences for people you never intended. To guard against this, there are several precautions you should take to protect your cards.
- Check your cards periodically to make sure you have them all.
- Keep a list of all your credit cards, their number, and the address and phone number of whom to notify in case of loss in a safe place.
- When making credit card purchases, be sure your credit card is returned to you after each purchase.
- If you have a card that operates a bank teller machine, memorize your personal identification number (PIN). Don't carry it written down in your pocket or purse.
- If your cards are lost or stolen, immediately telephone all the appropriate card issuers so they can take steps to stop charges to the card. Follow up phone calls with letters.
- More than 70% of credit card thefts are from women because purses are in plain view, or left unattended in hotel rooms, cars, offices, shopping and grocery carts, restaurants or on store counters. Most thefts occur on weekends and in crowded situations, shopping areas, or at sporting events.

ATM Security Tips

- **CHOOSE WISELY** — Use ATMs that are well lit and in well lit locations. Whenever possible, use ATMs in attended locations such as supermarkets.
- **STAY ALERT** — Use ATMs with convex mirrors so you can easily see the entire facility when entering, as well as while banking. These mirrors can also help you see someone approaching from behind.
- **BEWARE AND BE AWARE** — If there is anyone who looks suspicious, people at phone booths, in parked cars, or loitering nearby, find another ATM.
- **BE PREPARED** — Have your ATM card ready. Fill out deposit slips ahead of time. The less time spent at an ATM the better.
- **DON'T GO ALONE** — Ninety-six percent of ATM crimes are committed when there is only one person at an ATM.
- **LOCK UP** — If using a drive-up ATM, keep the doors locked and passenger windows shut.
- **BE RUDE** — Don't hold the door open for anyone when entering or exiting an ATM.
- **CLEAN UP** — Put your money and receipt away immediately, before exiting the ATM.





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Main Line (Non-Emergency)
617-349-3300

Emergency
9-1-1