

7 Common-Sense Tips for College Students to Protect Personal Safety



Every day, college students are vulnerable to threats to their personal safety. Incidences of stalking, assault, violence, sex offenses and bullying are common occurrences on college campuses. Taking precautions to protect personal safety is a necessity for every college student. According to the latest Department of Education report, on average **20 aggravated assaults and 25 forcible sex offenses were recorded per 100,000 students on college campuses and dormitories**. Enhancing personal safety is a top concern for students and their parents alike. Here are 7 top common-sense tips for protecting your personal safety:

1. Keep dorm room doors locked at all times.

Keeping your dorm room locked is a first line of defense against unwanted visitors and threats against personal safety. Always lock the door when you are in your room or away from it, and never give out spare keys or door codes.

2. Whenever possible, walk with a friend or a group.

There is safety in numbers. When you are walking on campus, especially at night, walk with a friend or with a group whenever possible. Let your roommate know your schedule and when you'll think you'll be back in the dorm room.

3. Don't allow strangers in your dorm room.

If someone is at the door that you don't know or aren't expecting, don't let them in. It's always best to be safe. Many attackers will force their way in when you open the door.

4. Avoid stairwells.

Attackers often lurk in dark or dimly lit stairwells, waiting for an unsuspecting victim. If you are walking alone, it's best to avoid dark stairwells in buildings and parking garages whenever you can. When possible use the elevator instead.

5. Carry mace, pepper spray, a loud whistle or other personal security item.

You can ward off a would-be attacker and protect yourself by carrying a loud whistle or personal alarm. Mace or pepper spray can also be useful; you just need to be careful that you use the sprays properly. It's also a good idea to take a personal defense class, which will prepare you for what to do if someone tries to attack you.

6. Limit walking on campus at night.

The majority of attacks on campus happen at night. Avoid walking alone on campus when it gets dark. And if you have to, walk in well-lit populated areas or walk with a friend.

7. Don't post personal information on social media.

College students love social media. However, posting a lot of personal information such as your location, phone number, date of birth, personal photos and your whereabouts—can put your personal safety at risk. Posting personal information can leave you vulnerable to stalkers, attackers and identity and other people who may jeopardize your well-being.

Following the above tips can enhance your personal safety and keep you safe on campus.