

Security Tips for the Holidays

Credit Cards

Credit cards are as good as cash and clerks rarely check identification. Most credit card companies hold the owner responsible for all purchases until the card is reported lost. To prevent credit card loss:

- Keep your credit cards in a safe place. Never leave them lying around the house.
- Inventory your credit cards daily. Report any losses immediately.
- Take only the cards you will need for shopping.



Cash

The tendency to carry large amounts of cash is greater during the holidays than at any other season of the year. Take special precautions when carrying large amounts of cash. Use checks or credit cards whenever possible. If you must carry cash:

- Take only the amount you plan to spend when shopping.
- Keep all money in a safe place. Do not leave it lying around the house.
- Avoid flashing your money in public. Keep your bills flat in a wallet so you can count them without taking them out of the wallet.



Transporting Gifts in Your Car

Gifts left unattended on the back seat of your car can be tempting to a burglar.

- Always lock your car.
- Pick up major items at the end rather than the beginning of a shopping trip.
- Lock all purchases in the trunk of your car. As a last resort, put them under a blanket on the floor.
- Immediately remove all purchases from your car when you return home.

Deliveries

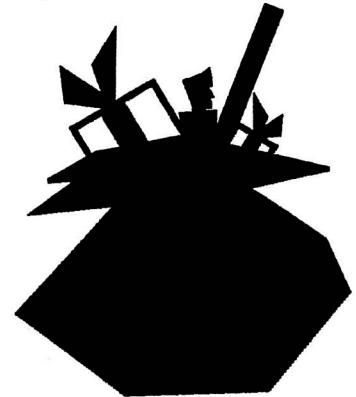
Packages left on doorsteps are easier to steal than those left in cars. Thieves have been known to follow delivery trucks. Do not give them an easy opportunity.

- Schedule deliveries for times when you are at home.
- Make arrangements to have your parcels delivered to a neighbor if you are unable to be at home.
- If you observe a delivery person doing anything that looks suspicious, ask to see their identification or call the police.

Displaying Gifts

Many people like to keep their presents out for days before or after the holiday. Our houses are particularly vulnerable during this time, given the amount of time spent shopping and visiting.

- Keep presents out of sight until they are given. Put them away before you leave your house unattended.
- Garage locks are usually the weakest locks you have. Avoid hiding presents in the garage. A second-story closet or attic offers you safer storage.
- Break up boxes, especially for purchases like televisions and stereos, and put the boxes in garbage bags.



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