

# Holiday Safety Tips



Alexandria  
Police  
Department

## CRIME PREVENTION TIPS FOR THE HOLIDAY SEASON

*The holiday season is a busy time of year, and a time when people are especially vulnerable to theft and other crimes. The following tips are designed to reduce your chances of becoming a victim of crime this holiday season and all year round.*

STAY ALERT to your surroundings and the people around you. If you see someone who looks suspicious, loitering in a parking structure/lot, or the outside of a store, leave the area and notify the police and/or security. If possible, park your vehicle in a well-lighted area of high pedestrian activity.

Lock your car and close your windows, even if you are gone for only a few minutes

Don't leave valuables in plain view; conceal them under the seat or in your trunk.

Even a purse or diaper bag left unattended is an opportunity for a thief.

Every year purses, wallets, laptop computers, and cell phones are stolen from vehicles. In most cases the vehicle is locked with the item laying in plain view. In some cases the vehicle is left unlocked.

Place your valuables in the trunk BEFORE you get to your destination, not after, a thief may be watching you.

Always lock your vehicle; many criminals check doors to see if they're unlocked.

Carry a cell phone for emergencies. Carry it in your pocket rather than purse in the event of theft or robbery.

If you have to wait for a ride from a friend or public transportation, do so in busy, well-lit locations.

Avoid carrying large amounts of cash. Pay for purchases with a check or credit card when possible; and if the credit card receipt has carbons, ask for these too.

Notify credit card companies immediately if your credit card is lost, stolen, or misused.

Always report a theft to the police.

When shopping with your children, teach them to go to the store clerk and ask for help if you become separated. They should never go to the parking lot or car alone.

Inattentiveness is an easy target for a pickpocket.

Carry a purse that can be secured, making it a difficult target for criminals

A wallet carried in your back pocket is an easy target for a pickpocket and can be removed without your knowledge. A rubber band around your wallet can make it easier to detect the wal-

let being removed from the back pocket. Consider carrying your wallet in a front pocket of your pants and place a comb in the fold of the wallet.

After you have completed a purchase, make sure you place your wallet and all of your credit cards back in your purse or pocket.

Avoid overloading yourself with packages. It is important to have clear visibility and freedom of motion when you are out. Nobody wants a house fire for Christmas, but it's so easy to let the spirit of the season distract us from common sense fire safety practices. Now is the time to brush up on the little things that can keep our families safe during the holidays.



## Fire Safety

If you have children, or expect children to visit for the holidays, take a tour from a kid's eye view. Get down at toddler level and you may be surprised at the hidden hazards in your home. A little time and attention at the outset can save a world of regret later.

### 22 Fire Safety Tips for Christmas

1. If you want a real Christmas tree, choose a fresh one and don't let it dry out — check the water level every day.
2. Don't hang on to your tree after it becomes dry and needles begin to fall out.
3. If you have an artificial tree, make sure it's flame retardant.
4. Place your Christmas tree away from heat sources, including fireplaces, heating vents, and candles.

### Electric Lights

5. If you use electric lights, make sure they're tested for safety and note whether they're for indoor or outdoor use.
6. Inspect lights before you use them. Don't use electrical decorations that have frayed wiring.
7. Don't use electrical wires where they can become a tripping hazard.
8. Don't overload your electrical system.

9. Turn off all electrical decorations when you go to bed at night.
- ### Candles
10. Don't use lighted candles on or near the Christmas tree or other flammable materials.
  11. Put candles where they are less likely to be knocked over.
  12. Keep candles, matches, and lighters out of reach of children.

### Fireplace

13. Hang your stockings by the chimney with care: don't let them hang too close to a working fireplace.
14. Don't burn evergreens or commercial gift wrapping in the fireplace — they can spark out of control.
15. Use a fireplace screen and make sure to check the flue.
16. Don't wear loose or flowing clothing when you're stoking the fire.

### Kitchen

17. Don't wear loose or flowing clothing when you're tending the stove.
18. When cooking, don't let the festivities distract you — never leave cooking unattended.
19. Use extreme caution with outdoor deep fryers typically used for turkey. Make sure it's not located too close to the house and follow

manufacture instructions. Never leave a deep fryer unattended, even for a minute. You can't use water on a grease fire, so make sure you have an all-purpose fire extinguisher (class K) close by.

### Make a Fire Safety Plan

20. Make sure your smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors are in working condition.
  21. Have at least one fire extinguisher on each level of your home.
  22. Make and practice a fire evacuation plan.
- Have a safe and happy holiday season.

Read more: <http://www.care2.com/greenliving/22-fire-safety-tips-for-christmas.html#ixzz2mXRcpQYW>



## Holiday Parties

As some might suspect, the holiday season is the most dangerous time of year for alcohol-related accidents and death. There are several reasons for this, including that more people drink during the holidays due to numerous parties and other festivities.

**People can follow these tips to avoid an alcohol-related disaster:**

Resist the pressure to drink or serve alcohol at every social event. Just because it's there does not require that you drink it. Alcohol is not a necessary ingredient for holiday cheer.

If you want to serve alcohol to your guests, offer nonalcoholic beverages as well. Make

your guests feel as comfortable choosing a nonalcoholic beverage as they would choosing alcohol. You can do this by putting nonalcoholic drinks in an easily accessible place and by asking guests what they would like to drink, instead of pointing them to the bar or handing them an alcoholic drink when they arrive.

If you or your friends are going to a party and plan to drink alcohol, decide in advance who will be the designated driver.

**Drinking and driving is not an option.**



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