

Shop Smart Safety Tips



City of
St. Joseph
Missouri

Many people look forward to the holiday season, but not as much as thieves. Thieves feed on crowds and distracted shoppers. They are also in the cyber world and are waiting to steal your identity. Whether you like fighting crowds for that bargain in the store or in the world-wide web, there are safety precautions you should consider:

-  Shop with a friend or family member and watch your children intently. You are less of a target when you have someone with you.
-  Lock your vehicle and check the parking lot for safety.
-  Avoid flashing the cash and consider alternate payment options.
-  Monitor your bank statement and credit reports.
-  Do not leave debit or credit cards on the counter and wait to get your card out when the cashier asks for it.
-  Avoid any untrusted websites.
-  Carry your purse and packages close to your body. Try not to carry too many bags at once.
-  Update your computer's security software.
-  Pay attention to your surroundings and park in well-lit areas as close to the buildings as possible.
-  Only purchase from secure websites.
-  Use cell phones sparingly and keep them put away. Thieves can snatch phones and purses out of your hands and escape in crowds of people. A cell phone can also distract you from being alert.
-  Do not use public Wi-Fi to shop.
-  Have a plan in case you get split up and choose a place to meet.
-  Change your passwords regularly.
-  If the deal sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Avoid those offers since they are more than likely cheap substitutes or damaged goods.
-  Don't have packages delivered to your home if you're not going to be there.

The key to safety is awareness. Always exercise caution in all situations, keep all your electronic or online receipts/ transactions and know your seller.