

# SAFETY AND SECURITY INFORMATION

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## SAFETY & CRIME STATISTICS:

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**Safety is our number one concern for you, and it should be high on your priority list too.**

DC is a large, international city, and, like any large city, has some unsavory to downright dangerous neighborhoods. In general, you want to stay away from the Southeast quadrant of the city. Notable exceptions are Eastern Market and Capitol Hill East. The West side of the city is typically safe and the Northeast quadrant becoming safer. Many neighborhoods are being gentrified, but it's a process and may still be in transition. You can look up crime rates on a number of sites. The top one is my favorite, the second is the DC police crime statistics website:

- ❖ <http://www.spotcrime.com/>
- ❖ [http://mpdc.dc.gov/mpdc/cwp/view,a,1239,Q,543308,mpdcNav\\_GID,1523,mpdcNav,%7C,.asp](http://mpdc.dc.gov/mpdc/cwp/view,a,1239,Q,543308,mpdcNav_GID,1523,mpdcNav,%7C,.asp)

For a baseline comparison, look at Woodley Park crime rates – it is a very safe (and expensive!) neighborhood.

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## SAFETY TIPS:

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### On The Street

- ❖ Avoid walking alone.
- ❖ Walk facing traffic. A person walking with traffic can be followed, forced into a car, and abducted more easily than a person walking against traffic.
- ❖ Use well-lit and well-traveled routes, avoiding alleys, entryways, and bushes. Avoid parks, vacant lots, and other deserted places.
- ❖ Walk purposefully and confidently—and keep moving. Be aware of your surroundings.
- ❖ If you think someone is following you, change directions several times and head toward bright lights and people. Go to a public place or a police station. Do not go home.
- ❖ Maintain your personal space. If a person moves inside your comfort zone, move away. If that person persists, run.
- ❖ Always let someone know where you are going and when you will return.
- ❖ Dress sensibly. Do not flaunt expensive jewelry or other items.
- ❖ Carry only necessary credit cards and cash.
- ❖ Carry purses or handbags close to your body.
- ❖ Trust your instincts. If something or someone makes you uneasy, avoid the person or situation and leave as soon as possible.
- ❖ Avoid using cell phones and headphones so you can be aware of your surroundings.
- ❖ Try to use ATM machines during the daytime. If you have to use an ATM during evening hours, use an ATM machine that is well lit or in an attended gas station or grocery store.
- ❖ Always know where you are and where you can find help if needed. Even if you are lost, act as if you know where you are going.
- ❖ Keep your head up and do not be afraid to make eye contact with others.
- ❖ Stay sober and coherent. Persons under the influence are more likely to be victims of serious crimes or accidents.

## **General Suggestions**

- ❖ Be aware of your surroundings. Many crimes occur “under the noses” of people who simply did not notice anything suspicious.
- ❖ Report non-working city streetlights.
- ❖ Your safety and security ultimately depend on you as an individual for effectiveness and success. You must take responsibility for your own safety.
- ❖ Report all crimes and any suspicious activity to the Police Department (911)
- ❖ If you return home and find an open/broken window or door, do not enter. Go elsewhere to call the police. Do not clean a burglary scene before the police arrive.
- ❖ Be alert when leaving stores or shopping mall. This is a time when criminals know you are carrying cash, credit cards, and/or valuable merchandise.
- ❖ Never volunteer information over the phone or the Internet to someone you don't know.
- ❖ On your voice mail, don't announce your name and number as part of the message.
- ❖ Use a U-bolt locking device for your bicycle.