

Campus Safety

General Preparedness



- There are numerous ways to stay aware and ready when on campus. Visit your Campus Safety Department webpage and sign up for their newsletter, alerts, or app that can be critical in case of an emergency. These alerts through the app, newsletter, or website can also share important updates related to campus crimes or other things to be aware of on your campus. DPrep Safety Division also has a newsletter called Sunday Safety Tips, and you can sign up on our [website](#).
- When you come into a new space or building, make note of the exits and remember that there may be other ways out besides the way you came into the building. Think about what you would do if your primary exit was blocked and you had to find another way out.
- When coming home to your residence hall or apartment building, have your key or key card ready prior to arriving at the door. Make sure to close the door behind you and don't open the door for someone you don't know or allow them to follow you into the secure area.
- Have a checklist ready in case you need to call 911 so you can stay focused and remember what you need to share. While it may seem like anyone can remember these basic details, like your exact address and phone number, when under stress, many callers' minds draw a blank and they can't remember basic information.
- Is there a shuttle on campus and/or can campus security escort you home safely? Be sure to know how to access this service before you need it.
- If you do have to walk at night, plan your route ahead of time. Choose well lit, busy pathways and streets. Avoid alleyways or "short cuts," as these can make an easy ambush point.
- When walking, project a sense of confidence. Walk with your head up. Don't get lost in looking at your phone or have music blasting that will reduce your reaction time if an unknown danger appears.
- If you do have to use your phone, stop, put your back to a wall and take care of what you need to do.
- Make sure to have campus emergency numbers programmed into your phone for quick access. Subscribe the campus emergency notification system or other programs your college offers.

Physical Safety

- Part of good situational awareness is taking extra precautions at night or in low-lit areas around campus. This is never about blaming the person who is harmed; the fault always lies with the attacker. Instead, this is about good situational awareness and preparedness. Consider walking with a friend and staying in well-lit areas with lots of people. Keep your keys ready in your hand so you don't have to search for them when you get to where you are going. Don't forget that many campus safety departments offer a safe ride if you are feeling concerned about getting back home safely.
- Consider carrying a flashlight or defensive weapon (e.g., keys). A personal safety device such as a sound or strobe alarm is inexpensive and can be found on Amazon or similar sites. Be sure to investigate your local laws regarding non-lethal devices, such as mace or pepper spray. These both require increased training and awareness to be used.

- When you are out walking or exercising, take steps to stay aware by turning off the noise cancellation feature on your headphones, keeping the volume low, and/or only using one headphone speaker. This is even more important when you are walking or exercising in an unfamiliar place, at night, or in low-light areas. Consider having a campus map on your phone in case you get lost or have to find an alternate route. Likewise, if you know how long you will be out, consider telling a friend you are going for a run or have an app ready that can notify friends when you are expected to return.
- Walk with a sense of purpose, confidence, and direction. Have you ever seen someone who isn't sure where they are going and appears lost? How do you know they are lost? What things do they do that telegraph they aren't sure where they are? Often, they are looking about, looking down at their phone and then up at street signs, or may seem frustrated, confused, or annoyed. These are the opposite qualities we want to communicate to others when we are in an unfamiliar place, at night, or feeling unsafe.
- Be aware that remote areas and some buildings or locations have limited or no cell service
- Fire extinguishers should be easy to find on campus. A fire extinguisher is heavier than one might think; it's important to practice holding one and learn how the pin mechanism works. Remember, fire extinguishers make great weapons when responding to an assailant, both as a spray and as a blunt force weapon.

In the Residence Halls

- Don't leave doors propped open or allow people to follow you through doors. Anyone entering the building, particularly after hours, should have their own keys/code. If they are visiting, they need to get access directly from the person they are visiting.
- While leaving messages outside your door can be useful, avoid posting what times you are coming and going as it shows when your room is empty.
- Know the quickest way to exit the building using the stairs. Remember, even windows can be used as an exit in an emergency. Learn these alternative routes prior to needing them.
- Know where the fire extinguishers are. Also, know how to use them. The video *How to Use a Fire Extinguisher Using the PASS Method* is a good starting place to learn what to do in case of a fire.
- If your building has an AED (an automated external defibrillator devices that can administer a shock in the field), know where it is and how to use it. While each AED may be different, consider watching *How to Use an AED* to have a basic understanding of how they work.

Large Events and Crowds

- Be aware of street hustles in large groups or public settings designed to lower your defenses. Someone may ask you for a very small amount of money (say, 35 cents) to get you to stop and take out your purse or wallet. A person may ask you for help to allow another person to pick your pocket.
- If the crowd begins to move, move with the crowd diagonally. Fighting against a crowd's movement is a battle you will almost always lose. Much like moving with the current during ocean riptide events, the goal in a crowd is to move horizontally across the group, slowly making your way to safety.
- Don't stand near fixed objects like a stage or stadium stanchion. If the crowd suddenly moves, you could be trapped or shoved against these unmovable objects.
- Think about your escape route if something happens at the event and the crowd starts moving. Have an initial escape route and a plan B and C as well.

- If you are surrounded by a crowd and can't make your way out, never go low, but rather raise your hands in a fighting stance to create a protective bubble of air around you. Going low runs the risk of you being trampled or kicked.

Theft prevention

- Keep doors and other access points locked and secured in your apartment, car, and anywhere you keep your valuables. Remember to lock windows and other access points that are commonly left open.
- Be smart about leaving expensive items in a car where they are easily seen by a thief. Most crimes occur out of convenience, and small steps to hide items away from plain sight can make all the difference.
- Theft most often occurs in large crowds and busy places. If you are bumped, check your valuables. Bumping into you or touching your hair, back, face, or body are all ways thieves can distract a person and misdirect their attention. Once bumped, realize this may be an attempt to steal from you, either by the person who bumped you or by someone working in tandem with them. Be careful not to immediately reach for your valuables or look at where you are keeping things you do not want stolen. This telegraphs to a potential thief where to strike next.

Drinking Awareness

- When (and if) you are out drinking with friends or at a party, think about how you will get home before you arrive. Have a good awareness of who is pouring your drinks and who has access to them. Don't leave drinks unattended; if you aren't sure if a drink has been tampered with, then dump it and get a fresh one.

Online Safety

- Always use a unique password for each application and avoid common words or phrases that may be found in the dictionary. Keep your personal information private and avoid passwords related to where you live, anniversaries, or pet names.
- If you use Venmo, Cash App, Zelle, or any similar app, remember to turn on privacy for your transaction history and be wary of accepting or making transactions with someone you don't know.
- Social media can be a great source of connection and enjoyment, but it also carries some risks. When posting, be aware of your location services and if you share where you are and where you are going. Likewise, take some time to view your friends and connections on social media to ensure you know the people you share information with and that your privacy settings are turned on.
- Always keep your device in your control. Don't hand your phone or laptop to someone you don't know or trust.
- Be cautious when completing social media quizzes online. While you may be interested in finding out what hobbit you might be or what cheese most captures your personality, you are sharing private information with the social media platform that runs the quiz.
- Avoid unsecured Wi-Fi hot spots in public settings. While connecting for free to public Wi-Fi is tempting, this can lead to exposure points for hackers and the installation of malware or viruses. Installing a Virtual Private Network (VPN) on your system may be helpful to reduce the risk, as it moves information through an encrypted tunnel that nobody can see into. However, any connection to a public entity raises the risk of data leaks and installation of harmful software.

- Review your privacy settings on your phone, laptop, and social media accounts. Make sure you sign out when you are done with your session.

Active Assailant Response

- Concealment hides us from a potential attacker. This makes it harder for them to aim a weapon at us accurately and gives us an opportunity to run further from the danger. Concealment does not, however, stop bullets or other projectiles, and finding cover that can do that is a preferred means of response.
- Unlike concealment, cover provides us with a barrier that can stop bullets or other projectiles, offering us a wider degree of protection. Objects made from concrete and stone will provide greater protection than sheetrock, plywood, and hollow doors. Likewise, the tires, wheel well, and engine block will provide greater protection than the door of a car.
- In any location, such as a classroom, lobby, house, or other familiar venue, identifying potential exits, concealment options, and cover should be part of your regular practice and preparedness. In unfamiliar locations or venues, developing a habit of looking for exits, concealment, and cover when you arrive in case of an emergency is a good practice to follow.
- Keep your dominant hand free to reclaim a few precious seconds of response time to react to a specific threat. Having your dominant hand free allows you to easily push someone away, grab a weapon or react in a defensive posture. If your dominant hand does have something in it, remember this could also be used to your advantage by throwing it at a potential attacker.

