

HOLIDAY SHOPPING

SAFETY TIPS



The holiday season is always a special time of the year. Unfortunately, crimes of opportunity increase during the holiday season. As you shop, please be mindful of the following safety tips to help keep your holiday shopping safe and joyous!

DID YOU KNOW?

Texas ranked 4th in the worst states for holiday crime.



- Alarms.org



Shoplifting tends to increase during the holiday season.

- National Association for Shoplifting Prevention

Holiday spending rose 8.5% between 2020 to 2021.

- Mastercard SpendingPulse



73%

of people ages 18-24 admit to **not checking the authenticity** of emailed or text messaged deals.

- McAfee.com



Nearly **50%** of consumers shop more online than in-store.

- Ibotta.com

PREVENTION



Whether you prefer online shopping or in-person, taking precautions to prevent victimization and/or avoid scams is pivotal to personal safety. Consider the following to ensure security measures are established in any setting.

In the Parking Lot:

- Be alert and off your cell phone when in a parking lot.
- Always park in an open and well-lit area.
- Be ready to unlock your car before leaving a store.
- Don't resist if someone tries to take any of your belongings - nothing is worth your life.

In-Store Shopping:

- Teach children to ask store personnel or security for help if you become separated.
- Ensure that children know their full name and your cell phone number.
- Be cognizant of your valuables and keep purses or wallets close to your body.
- Don't store gifts in your car. Remember to bring everything into your home.

Online Shopping:

- Only shop through trusted sources when shopping online.
- Never connect to unsecure public wi-fi for online shopping.
- Confirm your anti-virus software is updated on your home computer and mobile devices.
- Check your credit card and bank statements for fraudulent charges.



CONVERSATION STARTERS



- Do I use secure sources when shopping online?
- Am I remaining vigilant of my surroundings?
- Do my children know my phone number?
- How often do I check my credit card and bank statements?

PARTNERS & RESOURCES



- **Houston Police Department Cyber & Financial Crimes Division:** Investigates criminal activity carried out using technology and modern telecommunication networks. https://www.houstontx.gov/police/divisions/cyber_&_financial_crimes/index.htm
- **Harris County District Attorney Consumer Fraud Division:** Employs Fraud Examiners in the Major Fraud Division, Consumer Fraud, and the Public Integrity Division. <https://app.dao.hctx.net/contacts>
- **Harris County Sheriff's Office Financial Crimes Unit:** Educates the community on financial crime prevention and investigates financial crimes. <https://harriscountyso.org/Services/BURGLARYANDFINANCIALCRIMES>
- **FBI Internet Crime Complaint Center:** Accepts online internet crime complaints from the actual victim or a third-party complainant. <https://www.ic3.gov>

WHERE TO REPORT



- If you are in immediate danger, **call 911!**
- Report anonymously to Crime Stoppers of Houston at **713-222-TIPS (8477)** or **crime-stoppers.org**.

CRIME STOPPERS RESOURCE CENTER



We are committed to keeping you safe by providing you with resources and safety tips every month. Visit our resource center on our website at crime-stoppers.org/resource-center to take advantage of monthly safety tips, safety hot topic videos, podcast episodes, and more!



Scan the QR code for more info!