

Personal Safety

While there is no absolute protection from crime, increased awareness of crime prevention techniques can help decrease the possibility of crime occurring. As a member of the WPI community, you can help contribute to the safety of your peers by learning what you can personally do to keep things safe for yourself and others, how to report instances of crime or dangerous occurrences (both on and off campus), and the best ways to secure your property when on campus.

- Lock your door, even if you are only going to the bathroom or to the room next door. Many residence hall thefts due to unlocked rooms are conducted while the residents of the room are on the same floor, but planned to just step out for "one minute." It takes approximately 8 seconds for someone to walk into an unattended room and remove something such as a purse or jewelry.
- Lock your door when you are in your room, especially when you are asleep.
- Try to take showers only when there are other residents on your floor.
- Never leave handbags, billfolds, jewelry, or other valuables unattended in dorm rooms, showers, or lounges. Put them in a safe place in your room (under lock and key, if possible). Most thieves know to look in the top dresser drawer.
- Report to Campus Police any strangers loitering in or around the residence hall. They are a source of many thefts in your building.
- Try not to leave small items of value in your room during vacation periods and long holidays.
- If you receive annoying or obscene telephone calls, notify Campus Police (extension 5433) at once. It may be a prank, but you never know.
- Do not let strangers into your room.
- Do not advertise or write on your door where you will be or when you will return
- Never use your first name in telephone directories or mail boxes and avoid the prefixes Mrs., Miss, or Ms. List your first initial only.
- After moving into a new home or apartment, it is a good idea to change door and window locks.

- Never open your door to strangers! Repair persons and sales persons carry proper identification. It is in your best interest to request that they show it to you before you admit them. Also, most repair persons and sales persons make appointments beforehand. During non-working hours, if repair persons are making "emergency" repairs or checks, confirm the necessity of the work by phone before admittance. Have a friend with you while a repair is taking place, if someone asks to use the phone, offer to make the call, but do not open the door.
- Always keep windows secured and covered at night. Never reveal, either in person or to a telephone caller, that you are alone. Have two lights on in different locations of the house. This gives the impression of more than one person at home. To secure sliding doors, place a strong wooden broom handle or dowel in the lower track of the door.
- In apartment buildings, be wary of deserted laundry rooms.
- When walking at night, use the best lighted route and try not to walk alone.
- Escorts are available by calling Campus Police at 508-831-5433 or utilize WPI's shuttle bus services.
- If you are the victim of a crime, notify Campus Police immediately. It is their only chance to help you.
- Report any encounters with voyeurs or exhibitionists to Campus Police
- When you walk to your vehicle, have your keys ready in your hand so you will not have to stand outside your car looking for them in your handbag or pocket.
- Always check the rear seat and floor before you get into your car.
- Lock the doors as soon as you get into your vehicle and keep them locked.
- Do not pick up hitchhikers.
- If you believe you are being followed by another car, do not lead them to your driveway or parking lot. Attempt to locate open businesses, or drive to the Campus Police office or the Worcester Police Department. Use your horn and lights to attract attention. Try to obtain the license number of the other vehicle to pass on to the police.
- If you have car trouble, raise the hood and sit inside your car with the doors locked until assistance arrives. Ask the person who approaches to call a service truck for you. Keep an ample supply of gasoline.
- Do not stop to offer help to a stranded motorist, male or female. Stop at the next telephone booth and call the police or a service station.
- If you park your car and the attendant asks you to leave your keys, leave only the car keys.
- Walk near the curb and use the safest, lighted routes to your destination. Avoid alleys, parks, vacant lots, and dark parking areas.
- Never hitchhike.

- If you think someone is following you, cross the street, walk faster, or even walk down the middle of the street. Try to go to a lighted area, a store, or a group of people. Do not go to your home or your apartment.
- Do not accept rides from strangers. If a car approaches and you are threatened, walk in the opposite direction of the vehicle.
- Do not overload yourself with packages, books, or other things.
- If your purse is snatched, don't fight. Give it up rather than risk injury.
- Condition yourself to observe surroundings.
- Notice on the routes you travel those areas where you can seek help quickly, i.e., 24 hour store.
- Notice where pay or emergency phones are located ([view map](#))
- When traveling alone and heading for a particular destination, let someone know the route or alternate route you may take and the approximate time you should arrive. If an emergency does occur or your car breaks down, this will assist police and/or friends in knowing where to search first.
- Be prepared to defend yourself by running, screaming, or fighting.
- Report any suspicious activity to the police immediately.
- Report all sexual assaults to the police immediately.
- Always seek medical attention if you are assaulted.
- Know your physical and emotional limitations. Use your intuition!
- Never hitchhike.
- Do not accept rides from strangers.
- Do not resist an attacker who displays or threatens to have a gun, knife, or other weapon.