

## How Thieves Pick Their Targets (Part 1)

### Part 1: When going out- be on the lookout

Some people feel that bad luck follows them around. They may have continuous trouble with vehicles, problems at work or even become repeat victims of crime. When it comes to being targeted by a criminal, anyone can create their own "luck" by following a few guidelines to make themselves less appealing targets to those looking to commit a crime in the first place.

#### What Thieves Look For

Criminals follow the law of the jungle when choosing a target. Just like in the wild, they watch for someone who appears to be weak, timid and on their own. The key to avoiding an attack is to not display any of those signs! Walk quickly and with purpose when you are out, and if possible stay with a group or at least close to others. All predators prefer someone who is isolated as it gives them a chance to make their assault and remain unnoticed by others.

Anytime you are out in public, be aware of your surroundings. Watch others for suspicious behavior or anyone who might be studying you. Make eye contact, but only for a moment. The goal is to let them know you have seen them, not to provoke. When it is dark, stay in areas that are well lit, and avoid locations with ample hiding places where a thief may be waiting to relieve you of your wallet and valuables. Dress Appropriately for Your Destination

Fancy clothing and jewelry are great accessories in the proper environment, but there is a time and place for everything. You should never wear expensive items if you are going anywhere someone might be watching for an easy mark. This is especially important when you are on vacation in an unfamiliar city or a foreign country - displaying flashy necklaces or earrings may be like shining a beacon to a criminal. Be Careful of What You Allow Others to See

Women usually carry a purse, but it is important to keep it closed up so a passer by cannot see the what's inside. Most women know if they have a purse with a long strap to keep it across their bodies so it is not possible for someone to grab it and run. It is also important to keep wallets cell phones, anything of high value further down so someone cannot reach inside quickly and grab it.

Men should keep their wallets put away, and only open them when necessary to make a purchase. It is also a good idea to carry them in the front pocket- where someone cannot reach in and slide it out without detection. When getting change - look as quickly as possible to make sure it is correct and then put it away. You never know when a criminal who might take great interest in your money or personal possessions could be watching you.

Regardless of where you go and what you are going to be doing, it is important to stay vigilant and use common sense. Be aware that there are thieves everywhere. Showing off valuable belongings or displaying money and credit cards is a prime way to become a target.