

Holiday Safety Tips

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The holidays are a wonderful time to celebrate, but this year there are some unique challenges we haven't seen before. Below are some customary tips for holiday safety along with some new tips from the Irvine Police Department's Crime Prevention Unit on how to celebrate safely.

- **Shopping Tips:**
 - Many will be shopping online, so be aware of sales and emails that seem too good to be true. Go directly to the website of known retailers to make your purchases.
 - If shopping in person, wear your mask, stay alert and be aware of your surroundings.
 - Park in well-lit places, lock your car, and close the windows.
 - Carry only what you need to make your purchases, such as your ID, cash, and as few credit cards as possible.
 - Avoid overloading yourself with packages or shopping bags. It is important to have clear visibility and freedom of motion to avoid mishaps.
 - If you must leave items in your car, place them in the trunk.
 - Unpack your vehicle as soon as you get home; do not leave shopping bags or luggage in your car.
- **Packages:**
 - Bring your packages inside as soon as they are delivered.
 - Consider having items delivered to your place of business or to the nearest post office if you are not home during the day.
 - Use tracking numbers and delivery notifications to track your packages.
 - Ask that your package require a signature for delivery.
- **Solicitors:**
 - Be careful when solicitors come to your door.
 - Do not open your door to uninvited guests.
 - Respond verbally so they know you are home.
 - Independently research charities before donating or donate directly on their website.
 - Don't give in to pressure to make a "now or never" decision.
- **Travelling:**
 - Never leave a spare key near the front door.
 - Lock all your doors and windows.
 - Place lights on timers or sensors.
 - Consider video monitoring systems.
 - Refrain from posting on social media that you are travelling until you return home.
 - Remove all valuables from your vehicle when you arrive at your destination.
 - Only take with you what you need.
 - Have someone familiar with your home check on your property regularly.
 - Stop mail and deliveries while you are away.
 - Look through the eyes of a suspect when leaving your home and vehicles.

This has been a stressful year. Don't let criminals spoil your holidays. Consider some of the above safety tips and add safety to your daily language, not just during the holidays. Wishing you all a healthy, happy holiday season!