

12 Ways To Stay Safe On and Of College Campuses



College can be a great time for making friends, pursuing dreams, and moving forward with life; however, it's incredibly important now, more than ever, to know how to **stay safe on college campuses**.

1 – Stay Aware Of Your Surroundings

Many students involved in traumatic incidences became victims because they were not aware of their surroundings. Things like cell phones, headphones, and tablets make it all too easy to ignore your surroundings, and thus become unaware of an impending disaster.

Do yourself a favor and keep your nose out of your phone/tablet, and keep your volume on low if listening to music. Make sure to not only look ahead of you, but also around you and even behind you to ensure you know what's going on (and who's around you) at all times.

2 – Don't Walk Alone At Night

Both men and women should be advised of this; it can be dangerous to walk by yourself at nighttime, even on a college campus. Most campuses are deserted or very sparsely populated at night (even if there are evening classes in session).

As such, it's important to walk with a friend or other student through campus and back to a lit building. If there's nobody around and you need to get back to your dorm or car, call/ask a security officer or police officer. Their job is to keep you safe, and most will be happy to walk with you in order to do so.

3 – Keep An Eye On Your Drink

Drinking at a party can be a great stress reliever, but it can also be an opportunity for someone at the party to slip roofies or other drugs into your drink.

The best ways to avoid this is to not drink at all; however, if you choose to drink, make sure to watch the person that's making your drink, and then hold your drink the entire time you're at the party. Don't even leave it with a friend, they might set it down. If your drink is left unattended always just get another one don't take any chances.

4 – Download Safety Apps On Your Phone

Lots of apps have been developed to help college students call for help in times of trouble. For example, apps like SafeTrek, KiteString, and Circle of 6 communicate to your friends when you're in trouble, and also tracks your location so that your friends (and the police) can find you.

5 – Trust Your Gut

If you get the feeling that something isn't right in a situation or that you're in danger, don't ignore it. Too often students ignore their instincts, and wind up in destructive and even deadly situations because of it.

If you sense that you're in danger, leave the area or inform those around you of your concerns. This act alone could save your life, and if anything else it's better to be a little paranoid than to be dead.

6 – Monitor What You Say On Social Media Sites

Posting status updates of your whereabouts, or "checking in" at places on campus can seem like a harmless thing; however, this gives anyone on your friends list (as well as their friends) the ability to know exactly where you are.

The same is true for if you're going out of town; once you post on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram that you're leaving for vacation, you're letting the world know that you are gone from your home or dorm, thus leaving it susceptible to robberies or break-ins. Wait to post your vacation photos until you've returned from the trip.

7 – Locks Are There For A Reason

Although being in your dorm should be a relaxing time, you still need to take security precautions to keep yourself safe – which means locking your door when you're either asleep or alone. Talk with your roommate and let them know how important it is to keep the door locked. This can help prevent an attack and/or theft.

8 – Know Your Campus

Part of being aware of your surroundings is knowing where you are, where you're going, and what's around you. If you're new to campus (or even if you've been there a couple years), go and get a map of the campus.

This will help you navigate around the college, and get to know the locations of the buildings around campus. This is also a great method for planning escape routes in case an emergency occurs.

9 – Know The Best Ways To Call For Help

Find out if there is a police office on your campus, and know where to find security officials. Oftentimes there are also emergency phones around campus you can use to call for help in case a crisis occurs.

It's also important to put the campus' security phone number into your phone so you have it ready if you need it.

10 – Consider A Self-Defense Tool

I'm not saying you should carry a gun with you on campus, but carrying self-defense tools with you such as pepper spray or a loud whistle with you is a great way to be prepared in case something does occur.

11 – Know What To Do If There Is An Active Shooter

With all the shootings that have been happening in our nation over the years, it's just common sense to know what to do if this situation arises. It's scary to think about, but preparing now could save your life (and the lives of others) later.

12 – Travel In Groups

Whether you're in the daylight or not, it's important to travel with at least one other person around campus. This is because, although college campuses are typically crowded, there are areas where fewer students go, therefore making the likelihood of something happening greater.

Attackers are less likely to pursue you if they know they would have to fight more than one person. Always use caution and walk with others in order to stay safe and prepared. Never walk alone at night.