Recommendations for Safety

Regardless of your age, the best weapons against crime are alertness and common sense.

Durham is a safe place—if you think before you act. Most crimes are crimes of opportunity: They happen when you walk alone at night, leave your car unlocked, or leave your doors open.

Report crime, concerns, threats of violence, unwanted contact, and suspicious activity immediately. Dial 911 to reach Durham Police or 919.684.2444 to reach Duke Police.

Personal Safety

- Don’t walk alone at night, even if you’re walking a short distance, and avoid unfamiliar, dimly lit areas. Encourage your friends to do the same.
- Get a ride at night by calling Duke Van Services at 919.684.2020 or by scheduling a ride at duke.ridecell.com. You may also schedule rides and track the Duke Vans through the Ridecell app on your smartphone.
- When walking during the day, always be aware of your surroundings. Remember to walk briskly and with confidence, and avoid loiterers or people hanging out in groups. Make and off eye contact with people as you walk by.
- Do not respond to conversations from strangers on the street. Continue walking.
- Always have your keys ready when you approach your apartment or vehicle.
- Stay informed. Familiarize yourself with University emergency notification procedures and pay attention to Duke ALERT emergency text messages. Go to this site to sign up to receive Duke Alerts http://emergency.duke.edu/notified/text_msg/
- Be familiar with where crime is happening by visiting the Durham Police station crime tracking website http://durhamnc.gov/ich/op/DPD/pages/crimemap.aspx
- If a person confronts you and demands money or possessions, police officials suggest giving what is demanded and creating a safe distance.
- If you carry a purse, hold it security between your arm and your body. However, if someone tries to grab your purse, let them have it.
- If you feel uncomfortable or lost, go inside a store to get your bearings or directions. If driving and someone follows you from the store, do not drive home. Go to a well-lit place and call the police.
- When in doubt, please do not WALK. Pay the money and TAKE A CAB – especially at night.
- Excessive drinking may lead to negative consequences, including assault, illness, and driving under the influence. In the United States, the legal drinking age is 21. If you see someone who is passed out from alcohol, call 911 immediately.

Protecting your Property

- Always lock your residence or office when away and secure your belongings.
- Do not let strangers inside your apartment. Use your peephole to see who is at the door.
- Park your vehicle in busy, well-lit areas.
- Always roll up your windows and lock the car, even if it is in front of your home. Never leave your keys in the car or ignition. Always lock your car after entering it too.
- Have your car keys in hand so you don’t have to linger before entering your car. Also check the back seat before entering.
- Do not leave valuables such as laptop computers, cellular phones and chargers, cash, loose change, GPS systems, CDs, sports equipment, and important papers and documents in your vehicle. Do not leave packages in plain view inside your car. Put them in the trunk or cover them up.
- Carry your car registration and car insurance card in your car. Don’t leave personal identification documents or credit card in your vehicle.
- Copy your license plate and vehicle identification (VIN) numbers on a card and keep them with your driver’s license. If your vehicle is stolen, police will need this information promptly.
- Never hitchhike. Never pick up hitchhikers. Never. And don’t stop to aid motorists stopped on the side of the road. Call 911 and request help for them.
- If your car is the one that breaks down, open the hood and attach a white cloth to the car antenna. If someone stops to help, stay in your car. Roll down the window a little and ask them to call for assistance.

*******These tips have been from the Chronicle's Spring Housing Guide and Duke Police's Handout *******
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