



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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## Holiday Shopping Safety Tips

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### Personal shopping Safety

The Holiday season is upon us once again. It is a joyous time when we gather to celebrate with loved ones and friends. We also go to malls, shops and stores to buy simple or extravagant presents. Unfortunately, there are some people who enjoy the Holiday Season for the wrong reasons. Pickpockets, purse snatchers and other thieves prey on unsuspecting victims in crowds of shoppers, parking lots or other areas during the holiday shopping season. Enjoy yourself this Holiday Season but please remember to be safe! Here are some tips to keep in mind that may protect you and your valuables this year.

1.

Always remember to lock your vehicle and engage your car alarm if you have one. Don't neglect to lock up because you'll "only be gone a minute"-a minute is all a thief needs to steal personal belongings or presents from your unlocked car.

2.

Lock your purchases in the trunk. Don't leave items in plain sight on the seats or floor of your car.

3.

Don't overload your arms with packages. A person who is loaded up and fumbling with packages is distracted and an inviting target for thieves

4.

Try not to carry large amounts of cash with you. Use debit or credit cards when possible. Also, carry only one or two cards with you when you shop, leave the rest at home. If you do carry cash, keep it in your front pocket not in your wallet or purse.

5.

When parking in parking lots or ramps try and park as close as possible to the store entrance. If you must park farther away, try and park your car in a well-lighted area. When returning to your vehicle have your keys out and ready. Before you get into your car, check the back seat. If you feel unsafe returning to your car ask mall or store security to walk with you.

6.

Never leave purses in shopping carts or out of sight. Always make sure your purse is zipped or snapped shut. Open handbags are an invitation to thieves. Also, when enjoying a holiday meal in a restaurant, never hang your purse on the back of your chair. Always keep it on your lap or on the floor in front of you.