



LifeSmarts

Learn it. Live it.

Key Points

TRUST YOUR INSTINCTS

If a situation or person makes you feel uncomfortable or unsafe, don't ignore that feeling—remove yourself if possible and seek help.

ESTABLISH CLEAR BOUNDARIES

Be firm about your personal space, privacy, and comfort levels, especially in dorms, group housing, or public spaces.

PROTECT YOUR BELONGINGS

Use locks, keep valuables out of sight, and don't leave items unattended in shared areas like gyms, libraries, or laundry rooms.

Core Concepts

SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

Stay alert to your surroundings and the people around you. Limit distractions like headphones or phones when moving through shared spaces.

UNDERSTANDING POWER DYNAMICS

In shared spaces, people in authority may misuse their power. Recognizing unfair control or intimidation helps you protect yourself and others.

CONSENT AND PERSONAL SPACE

Understand that everyone deserves respect. Clearly communicate your boundaries and recognize when others set theirs.

DIGITAL SAFETY IN PHYSICAL SPACES

Be mindful of what you share online about your location, schedule, or living situation. Oversharing can increase risks in shared environments.

SAFETY PLANNING

Have a plan for what to do if you feel unsafe, including exit routes, safe contacts, and campus or workplace security resources.

REPORTING AND SUPPORT

Know how and where to report concerning behavior or safety violations, and seek out trusted adults, RAs, or HR when needed.

StudySmart Guide - StudySmart Guide - StudySmart Guide - StudySmart Guide

Personal Safety in Shared Spaces

Additional Resources

National Crime Prevention Council – Personal Safety Tips

Practical tips for staying alert and safe in public and at home

<https://bit.ly/4mAiXHI>

Public Transportation Safety, Etiquette, and Tips

From the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania how to be safe and polite on public transportation

<https://bit.ly/45khM9j>

National Fire Protection Association

Staying safe in campus housing

<https://bit.ly/4fpXWMW>

YouTube - Ten Personal Safety Tips for Your Everyday Life

The Safe Streets Campaign gives actionable steps you can use in your own community

<https://bit.ly/40WIHoS>

Listen to the Podcast



Explore and Explain

1. How does being aware of your surroundings help prevent dangerous situations?
2. Why is it important to trust your instincts when something feels off or unsafe?
3. What tools or strategies can help you stay safer when you're out alone or in a new place?
4. How can digital habits—like sharing your location or meeting people online—influence your personal safety offline?

Personal safety is about staying alert, making confident choices, and protecting yourself in both physical and digital spaces.

Personal Safety



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Acronyms

AED

Automated External Defibrillator

ICS

Incident Command System

SAFER

Scan, Assess, Formulate,
Execute, Reassess

SOP

Standard Operating Procedure

TSA

Transportation Security
Administration

Vocabulary

BOUNDARIES

The personal limits you set to feel safe, respected, and in control of interactions

BUDDY SYSTEM

A safety practice where you stay with a trusted friend in public or unfamiliar spaces

BYSTANDER INTERVENTION

Speaking up, distracting, or getting help when someone is in danger

CODE OF CONDUCT

Rules for how people should act in a shared space so everyone feels safe and respected

CONSENT

Clear, voluntary agreement to something—especially in personal or physical interactions

EMERGENCY EXITS

Designated ways to leave a space quickly and safely during an emergency

PERSONAL SPACE

The area around your body that feels comfortable and safe; can vary by culture or context

RISK ASSESSMENT

Identifying possible dangers ahead of time & making a plan to avoid them

SAFE WORD

A pre-agreed word or signal used to pause or stop an activity, often used in trust-based situations

SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

Staying alert to your surroundings and noticing signs of potential trouble