

## Holiday shopping tips



### Thieves love the holiday season, too.

The holiday season is upon us. There is a big increase in the number of people that are out and about at shopping malls and in parking lots. It's a time that criminals love, too. Thieves move through big crowds of rushed and distracted people undetected. They can pick your pocket, shoplift,

and steal your packages. Some thieves are also busy breaking into cars in parking lots to steal gifts, cell phones, and other electronics.

### Keep from becoming a holiday crime victim.

Everyone needs to be more careful, prepared, and aware during the holiday season. Here are a few tips to remember. If you have high school or college students share these tips with them, too.

- If you shop at night, do not do it alone.
- Dress casually and comfortably.
- Avoid wearing expensive jewelry.
- Do not carry a purse or wallet, if possible. Consider using a security travel pouch instead.
- Only carry your driver's license or identification with the necessary cash, or credit card you expect to use.
- Keep cash in your front pocket and avoid carrying large amounts of cash.
- Avoid overloading yourself with packages. It is important to have clear visibility and freedom of motion if you are approached.
- Beware of strangers approaching for any reason.
- If you discover that a credit card is missing, notify the credit card company as soon as possible. Don't assume that you misplaced it and will find it later.

## Parking lot safety

Parking lot safety is especially important during the holidays. With high concentrations of distracted shoppers criminals see easy targets. Many people multitask when walking to and from their vehicles.



Don't be a target. Stay alert and use common sense. Here are a few tips to remember when you are out shopping.

- Put the cell phone away and walk with your head up and scan your surroundings.
- Park in a well lit, busy area and take notice of where you parked.
- Keep all doors locked and windows closed while in or out of your car. Set your alarm.
- Do not approach your car alone if there are suspicious people in the area. Ask mall or store security for an escort to your car.
- Put your packages in your trunk before getting to your next destination.
- Be sure to locate your keys prior to going to your car.
- Avoid parking next to vans, trucks with camper shells, or cars with tinted windows.
- Keep a secure hold on your purse, handbag and parcels. Do not put them down or on top of the car in order to open the door.
- Never leave your car unoccupied with the motor running or with children inside.

## Use the ATM safely

So you are out shopping and need some cash. You are nowhere near your bank, and you decide to use an ATM machine. ATM machines can be very convenient. However, it's also a place where criminals may try to rob you or steal your identity. Here are some precautions you can take to keep your ATM transactions safe and secure.

- Be observant and look around for any suspicious persons or activity near the ATM machine. If necessary, go to another machine or return later.
- Have your card in your hand ready to use so you do not have to take extra time at the machine.
- Shield your transaction. Use your body, hand or an object to shield the ATM keyboard when you enter your PIN. Do not give someone else the opportunity to see the number you are entering.
- Don't leave your receipt.
- Put your cash immediately in your pocket.
- Keep your car secured. Lock your car if you have to get out to use the ATM machine.
- Try to avoid using an ATM at night.



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## How to avoid holiday scams



### ...there's also a dark side to the season.

The holidays are a time for getting together with family and friends, but there's also a dark side to the season. Scammers and hackers are also ready to scam the unsuspecting.

Here are a few holiday scams you can avoid:

- **Gift Cards:** Be careful where you purchase gift cards. Never purchase them from an unknown source, especially on-line. Stores are also filled with racks of gift cards that give shoppers many options. However, it is also very simple for a thief to tamper with them. A thief can easily scan codes, copy down PIN numbers, or replace new gift

cards with used ones. There have been many cases where people receive a gift card only to find when they try to use it there is no balance remaining on the card. Your best option is to get the card directly from the store they are from and from the store cashier. You can also ask the cashier to scan the card to ensure it has the correct balance before you leave the store.



- **Shipping phishing attacks:** After making holiday purchases on-line many consumers pay close attention to delivery and email confirmations. Criminals know that and can send fake emails with delivery information. The bogus emails will have the subject line look very similar to "FedEx, UPS, or USPS" email notification. The emails are used to dupe the receiver into opening an attachment. The attachment contains malware or viruses designed to infect the user's device and allow the cyber-criminal to steal personal information. Also be aware of physical delivery locations. Many criminals follow

delivery trucks and steal packages left in front of homes. If you won't be home, plan to have your package delivered to a location where someone can secure it for you.

- Check your credit card activity frequently during the holidays. Often times one or two major data breaches occur each holiday season. Remain alert to suspicious activity on your card. If you notice any unauthorized charges, immediately contact your credit card company.
- Keep an eye out for "microcharges" on your credit card. Hackers often test cards to see if they are valid by charging small amounts of \$1 or \$2. If those cards are found to be valid, hackers can then sell them to other crooks for a premium. Don't overlook small, unauthorized charges.



## Vacation house checks



Making vacation plans? Now you can add a little peace of mind to your travel agenda. As staffing permits, Roseville Police Department volunteers will check your house periodically while you're gone.

Roseville Police "Citizens On Patrol" volunteers will check the exterior of your home while you're away, making sure doors and gates are secure and any unwanted papers or advertisements are removed from the entry way. If they see a problem they'll notify you and, if

appropriate, will have a police officer respond.

To submit a request, complete the "Vacation House Check Request Form" **at least a week before your departure date**. This form can be found on our website: [www.Roseville.ca.us/police](http://www.Roseville.ca.us/police). Search "Vacation House Check."

For more information, please call the Roseville Police Department volunteer line at (916) 746-1052.

*Sources: Platinum AB Bank, CBSnews.com, ABC news, FBI, University of North Carolina Survey, Rutgers University School of Criminal Justice survey, LAPD Website*

**Police Department**  
1051 Junction Blvd.  
Roseville CA 95678  
(916) 774-5000  
[www.roseville.ca.us/police](http://www.roseville.ca.us/police)

**Call 9-1-1**  
**EMERGENCY**  
IN PROGRESS

**Abandoned Vehicle**  
**Hotline**  
(916) 746-1022

**Alarms/Alarm Permits**  
(916) 774-5093

**Animal Control**  
(916) 774-5090

**Community Events &**  
**Neighborhood Watch**  
(916) 774-5050

[PDCommunityServices@roseville.ca.us](mailto:PDCommunityServices@roseville.ca.us)

**Graffiti Abatement**  
(916) 746-1021

**Police News & Crime**  
**Alert Emails:**  
[www.roseville.ca.us/enotify](http://www.roseville.ca.us/enotify)

**RCONA**  
(Roseville Coalition Of  
Neighborhood  
Associations)  
[www.RCONA.org](http://www.RCONA.org)



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