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Our mission is to campaign, educate and support people to help reduce the risk of violence and aggression for everyone.

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Suzy Lamplugh Trust was founded in 1986 following the disappearance of the young estate agent. The aim of the Trust is to raise awareness of the importance of personal safety and to help people to avoid violence and aggression and live safer, more confident lives.

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**KEEPING SAFE**

**THE FESTIVE SEASON**

**WAS THIS HELPFUL?**

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# Festive Season Safety

**Christmas is a time to relax and have fun but it can also be very busy and stressful. You may be out and about more than usual – for that essential Christmas shopping and to festive parties and other social events – and the last thing you need is to become a victim of crime. To help avoid this, consider some of the following advice:**

## Christmas Shopping

- Don't get loaded down with too many bags. Try to keep one hand free.
- Try and avoid taking young children into busy shopping areas. If it is unavoidable make sure they know what to do if they lose you, e.g. tell the nearest counter assistant that they are lost and NEVER leave a shop without you.
- Agree a meeting point with older children in case you get separated.
- Be careful where you park your car, especially if you will be returning to it after dark.
- If parking in a multi-storey car park, choose a well-lit space as close to the exit as possible and away from pillars. Reverse into position.
- Keep car doors locked whilst driving in built-up areas, especially if you've got bags of presents in the car.
- Don't leave presents on show in a parked car, as they could tempt thieves.
- Keep alert and aware of your surroundings, especially in busy shops and crowded streets where thieves and pickpockets may well be operating.
- Keep a close watch on your valuables and try not to keep them all in one place.



## TOP TIPS

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## Christmas Parties

- Most of us like a drink or two but remember that alcohol will affect your judgment – don't let it endanger your personal safety.
- Remember, the most common date rape drug is alcohol, with victims being given drinks with a far higher alcohol content than they think.
- Watch your drinks and food to ensure that nothing is added to them.
- Never leave your drink unattended, even if you are going to dance or to the toilet.
- If your drink has been left unattended, don't drink any more of it.
- If something tastes or looks odd, don't eat/drink any more of it. Be aware, though, that some date rape drugs are colourless and tasteless.
- If someone you don't know or trust offers to buy you a drink either decline or accompany them to the bar and watch that nothing is added.
- Know your own limit.
- If you meet someone new at a party, avoid going home with them or inviting them back to your home/accepting a lift from them. It's far safer to arrange a second date in a public place to get to know the person better. If you do find yourself alone with someone you don't know well, make sure that someone knows where you are and who you're with.
- Pay attention to your instincts. If you feel uneasy about someone, there may be a reason.
- Carry your keys, mobile phone and some money in your pocket on the way home, so you can give up your handbag or wallet and escape quickly if necessary.

## Transport

- The party's over and you need to get home. You are likely to be tired and slightly the worse for wear so you need to be careful.
- The ideal plan is to book your cab or taxi in advance or call a licensed cab company from the party and arrange for them to pick you up right outside the venue.
- Never accept a lift from a minicab touting for trade on the street. They are illegal and can be very dangerous.
- Always sit in the back of a cab/taxi and if you get chatting to the driver, do not give away personal details. If you feel uneasy with the driver, ask him to stop at a busy familiar place and get out.
- If using public transport, have your ticket, pass or change ready in your hand so that your wallet or purse is out of sight.
- Always wait for the bus or train in a well-lit place near other people if possible and try and arrange for someone to meet you at the bus stop or station.
- Take note of where the emergency alarms are and try to sit near them.
- If a bus is empty or it is after dark, you may feel safer on the lower deck as near as possible to the driver.
- On trains, avoid empty compartments or compartments that have no access to corridors or other parts of the train. If you feel threatened on any public transport press the alarm and/or make as much noise as possible to attract attention of your fellow passengers or the driver or guard.