

As the Holiday Season approaches, malls, retailers, and grocery stores are more crowded than usual with busy shoppers. Here are some shopping tips to help you shop safely for those great holiday bargains



**Harris County Sheriff's Office  
Community Services Division**

Community Services Division  
713-759-9454  
9111 Eastex fwy. #300  
Houston, Texas  
77093



## **Holiday Shopping Safety Tips**



**Harris County Sheriff's Office  
Community Services Division**

**713-759-9454**



# Shopping Safety Tips



## Shopping In Stores

- Do not buy more than you can carry. Ask for assistance, if needed, to help you carry your purchases out to your car.
- Do not leave packages visible in your car window. Lock them in the trunk, or if possible, take them home.
- Have your keys in your hand when approaching your vehicle. Check back seat and around your car before getting in it.
- Deter pickpockets. Carry your purse close to your body or wallet inside a coat or front pant pocket.
- Tell security if you see an unattended package.
- Double check for your credit card or checkbook after you make a purchase.

## Shopping with Children

- If you are shopping with small children, have a plan in case you are separated from each other.
- Have a central meeting place.
- Ensure that children know your cell phone number. Give cards with contact information to any children who do not.
- Go over Stranger Danger with your children, so that they know who not to talk to or follow.

## Prevent Identity Theft

- Consider alternate options to pay for your merchandise, such as onetime or multiuse disposable credit cards, for online stores and auction sites.
  - Wait until asked before pulling out your credit card or checkbook. An enterprising thief would love to shoulder surf to get your account information.
- Keep personal information and passwords secure. Do not respond to requests to “verify” your information unless you initiated the contact. Legitimate businesses will not contact you in this manner.
- Use secure websites for purchases. Look for the icon of a locked padlock at the bottom of the screen or “https” in the URL address/
- Shop with companies you know and trust. Check for background informa-



- tion if you plan to buy from a new or unfamiliar company.
- Beware of “bargains” from companies with whom you are unfamiliar – if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.
- Save receipts and print confirmations for online purchases. Check bank and credit card statements for purchases and possible fraudulent purchases.

