

Safety Bulletin

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS
POLICE AT HOUSTON



(713) 792-2890

 [@UTPOLICEHOUSTON](https://twitter.com/UTPOLICEHOUSTON)

How to stay safe in parking garages and parking lots

If you have ever used a parking garage or parked in a parking lot, you understand that they can be an opportunity for criminals. With so many floors and path ways that all look alike, it is easy to become distracted or disoriented. There are precautions we all should take when we are walking through a parking garage or parking lot even if it's in an area you are familiar with.

Stay alert and prepared. It's easy to get distracted walking to your car in the age of smart devices. Talking on the phone, texting and listening to music are distractions and take your attention away from your surroundings. If an attacker is hiding in the garage or behind parked vehicles and sees that you are unaware of their presence because you're on your phone, it makes you an easy target. Stay in well-lit areas and use walkways or crosswalks whenever possible. Keep your keys out and don't linger once you're in your vehicle.

Park near an entrance/exit. Park as near to entrance or exit as you can. The closer you are, the less time you'll have to spend walking through the lot or garage. Choose a well-lit spot. Note where you're parked. Write it down if you have to or take a quick photo of the section or row number. You don't want to be wandering around looking for your car when it's time to leave.

Walk with a buddy. When possible, walk through a parking garage with at least one other person. Walking by yourself may make you an easier target, especially if you look timid or lost. Walking with a group provides more safety for yourself and your colleagues if an attacker is in the vicinity.

If you have a security related concern, you can contact UT Police at (713) 792-2890 to request a personal safety escort after business hours.

Participate in Your Safety

- Be aware of your surroundings and the people around you – especially if you are alone or it is dark. Avoid using headphones, cellphones or other mobile devices while walking, driving or jogging.
- Do not walk alone at night; stay in lighted walkways or after business hours call UT Police to request an escort to get you safely to your vehicle.
- If someone in a vehicle stops and asks for directions, answer from a distance. Do not approach the vehicle.
- Trust your instincts. If you feel uncomfortable in a place or situation, leave right away.
- If you see any suspicious persons or vehicles, contact UT Police immediately at 713-792-2890.

###

Report suspicious persons to UT Police at **713-792-2890** and visit us online www.utph.org.