



**Police Service**  
of Northern Ireland

# Protect Yourself

A GUIDE TO PERSONAL SECURITY



**we care  
we listen  
we act**



# Contents

Introduction	<b>05</b>
Vulnerability	<b>06</b>
Security at Home	<b>08</b>
The Internet and Social Networking Sites	<b>16</b>
Security Away From Home	<b>20</b>
Delivered Items	<b>27</b>
Children and Family	<b>30</b>
Physical Threats	<b>32</b>
Publicity and the Media	<b>34</b>
Summary	<b>36</b>
Contacting the Police Service of Northern Ireland	<b>36</b>
Notes	<b>37</b>

The advice contained in this booklet is based on common sense. Taken and adapted to the individual needs of the reader, it will provide a firm foundation on which to build a personal security system.

The intention is not to cause alarm or anxiety, but to offer practical advice and guidance to help you and your family reduce any possible threat or risk to your security and well-being.

You and your family can be assured that all sensible precautions have been taken. No one has more responsibility for your personal security than you - don't make the terrorist or criminal's job easier through laziness or complacency.

## Introduction

Our own security and the safety of those close to us is of the utmost importance. The more you do to 'Protect Yourself', the safer you and your family will be.

The precautions you take will be determined by the extent or level of threat you are likely to encounter. This can be assessed by giving consideration to:

- **Environment**
- **Profession**
- **Specific threats**
- **Personal history**

The security measures taken should be appropriate to the perceived threat. If they are excessive, they may cause unnecessary inconvenience and stress; if they are insufficient, you may put yourself at risk.

# Vulnerability

Vulnerability means openness to successful attack. It is important you learn to recognise these situations so that you can avoid them where possible and be on your guard when you cannot.

For example, most people are relatively vulnerable when answering the door at home, preparing to drive off in their car, being distracted when using an electronic device in a public place, interacting online or at any time when their movements can be predicted.

Attackers can be creative when it comes to finding ways and means to target individuals and their families. The objective may be to use embarrassment, inconvenience and distress, but may also include the intent to cause physical injury or threaten life itself. It is worth keeping a diary in which to evidence all such incidents.

No one can be on 'red alert' 24 hours a day. The information in this booklet will help you decide where you need to take precautions, when to maintain the highest level of alert and when you should involve the police.

Look out for suspicious or unusual behaviour in people around you - near your home, where you work, and places you visit regularly.

Be alert to possible threats arising from your public, commercial or private activities, and advise those of your associates, family and staff who may need to be aware of the situation so that they can take more precautions.

Try not to establish an observable pattern of behaviour that would enable a potential attacker to:

- **Predict your future movements and construct a plan around them**
- **Trap you in situations where you are least able to protect yourself**
- **Isolate you from help**

Ideally, if you are giving an interview or meeting with someone you don't know well, you should arrange to:

- **Meet in a recognised place of business during normal hours**
- **Meet in the presence of, or near to, associates, members of your family or other trusted people who, if necessary, can call for help**

Avoid letting details of your public, business or domestic life become more widely known than is necessary. Refrain from referring to these details in conversations held in public places, or through entries in political, commercial or social directories.

Try not to work or stay overnight in situations that may threaten your safety and isolate you from people who can give, or call for help.

A would-be assailant who can see that you, your family, associates and staff are on guard, may well be deterred from

carrying out an attack. Establish good, habit-forming personal security practices.

If, for any reason, you believe that an attack is imminent, you should summon help by the best means available to you. If you can safely do so, telephone the police (999), sound an alarm, or attract the attention of other people and ask them to call the police for you.

Raising an alarm, drawing attention to your predicament and acting decisively can be enough to deter a potential attacker.

You should ask the police for help:

- **If you see anyone behaving suspiciously near your home, workplace, etc**
- **If your car, your home, or your office show signs of either having been tampered with or unexpectedly entered**
- **If you believe an event or activity you are planning may carry a particular risk, leaving you vulnerable to attack**

# Security at Home

The following advice is not exhaustive, nor will it apply in every case. Appropriate measures should be taken to meet individual needs.

Your local police Crime Prevention Officer (CPO) is available and qualified to advise on ways to deter unlawful entry to your property - this service is provided free of charge. Visit the website [www.psni.police.uk](http://www.psni.police.uk) and click on the link to Crime Prevention.

## General

There is now a requirement to have mains-operated smoke detectors fitted in new builds. Fit a mains-operated smoke detector or fire alarm system in your home if there is not already one installed. Consider having a fire extinguisher and fire blanket available for emergencies. Fit approved smoke alarms with a British Standard Kitemark or Loss Prevention Certification Board (LPCB)

For further information:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/make-your-home-safe-from-fire](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/make-your-home-safe-from-fire)

Maintain a good quality first aid kit.

Fit an intruder detection system (burglar alarm). Set external sounders at 'instant' to deter intruders if the alarm or a personal attack button is activated.

An alarm can be fitted to doors, windows or gates if the threat justifies such action.

Intruders do not want to be seen, or heard therefore security lighting and alarms can be effective deterrents.

It is recommended you use a contractor who is affiliated to one of the recognised alarm inspectorate bodies, such as the National Security Inspectorate (NSI) or the Security Systems and Alarms Inspection Board (SSAIB) to undertake an installation.

Generally there are four types of intruder alarm system:

**Monitored** - provides a police response via the alarm company

**Speech dialler** - automatically calls pre-programmed key holders (not police)

**Audible only** - relies on neighbours or passers-by to react

**Smart Home Security** - relies on an internet based app alert sent to a smartphone or other internet device

The most suitable alarm for your needs will depend on your situation, property and advice from your insurance company.

A good guard dog is an asset. A barking dog may warn you of intruders.

On return from holiday, check your house and garage for signs of forced entry. Advise the police of any suspicious vehicle or people seen near your home. Ask your neighbours to keep you informed about any suspicious activity.

Where possible, avoid routine in public and private life.



## Doors, Windows and Locks

Do not answer the door immediately; check who is there by looking through an adjacent window, or install and use an intercom. Ensure good quality locks are fitted to external doors, access windows and other openings (e.g. cat flaps). Fit blinds or curtains to glazed exterior doors.

Fit a cable guard or strong door chain on outer doors - make sure you use it. Know where all your door keys are. Do not hand keys out to builders, etc.

Consider fitting an internal shield/cowl (letter guard) to prevent car and house keys being fished through the opening.

A video door phone or an intercom will enable you to identify callers before you open the door. Even then, the door should only be opened with the chain or limiter still in place.

Consider hanging heavy curtains on the windows of the rooms most frequently used by your family.

Obscure the view into your home by fitting blinds, curtains or tint. Get into the habit of closing curtains or blinds when occupying a well-let room.

Fit window locks on all windows. Ensure you do not contravene fire regulations in common areas and public buildings.

Make sure window lock keys for windows that could be used for egress in the event of a fire are kept to hand. They should not be visible or within reach from outside. An Evacuation Plan should be known to all occupants.

Before retiring each night, make a safety check to ensure all doors and windows are locked.



If you are suspicious of a caller, don't open the door.

Keep fences, gates and walls in a good state of repair and maintain hedges, trees and spiky defensive scrubs and planting growing around your property. A well maintained boundary will make it more difficult for intruders to access your property. Hedging, fencing, walls, trees and shrubs will make it more difficult for intruders to access and see into your property.

Consider installing a television linked CCTV system to assist in the identification of visitors.

Seek further advice from a professional CCTV installer accredited to one of the recognised CCTV inspectorate bodies, such as the National Security Inspectorate (NSI) or the Security Systems and Alarms Inspection Board (SSAIB).

For more information about the legal requirements of CCTV visit the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO):

**[www.ico.org.uk/your-data-matters/  
domestic-cctv-systems-guidance-for-  
people-using-cctv](http://www.ico.org.uk/your-data-matters/domestic-cctv-systems-guidance-for-people-using-cctv)**

## House and Grounds

To deter intruders, the perimeter of the property should be made as secure as possible.

Check garage doors and windows each morning for signs of forced entry. Garages, outhouses and garden sheds should be kept locked when not in use



Keep the area around your home clear and tidy. This will enable you to identify unusual or suspicious objects quickly. Booby trap devices come in many forms and sizes - they may even be disguised as familiar objects.

If possible, keep your dustbin/recycling bin in an enclosed yard until collection day. Nothing of a sensitive, confidential or personal nature should be placed in the bin.

Do not handle suspicious objects - call the police and evacuate the immediate area.

Remove objects that could be used as missiles: for example, loose bricks, large stones and garden ornaments.

Posters or offensive notices should not be removed without prior, careful examination.

## Waste Disposal

When discarding sensitive, confidential or personal material, ensure that you treat it as confidential waste and shred it where possible to avoid identity theft.

## Lighting

Good external lighting can help to deter intruders.

Consider lighting the approaches to your home and outlying buildings with exterior lights sited out of reach. Low wattage lighting is recommended to illuminate all external doors, car parking, garage areas and footpaths leading to your home. Exterior lighting may be activated by light sensors or passive infrared (PIR) detectors. Manual override switches allow complete personal control.

Install an illuminated 'courtesy' light operated by a photo electric cell (dusk to dawn) in the area of the front door.

Always have reserve lighting, such as a torch, lamps or candles, and keep them in a convenient place where you can easily find them.

Consider fitting other forms of security lighting for use in emergencies or if suspicion is aroused. Floodlights, sited in strategic places, make it difficult for would-be assailants to hide from view.

Unless there is no outside light, never switch on an inside light to answer the door after dark.

Useful websites:

[www.securedbydesign.com](http://www.securedbydesign.com)

[www.ico.org.uk/your-data-matters/  
domestic-cctv-systems-guidance-  
forpeople-using-cctv](http://www.ico.org.uk/your-data-matters/domestic-cctv-systems-guidance-forpeople-using-cctv)

[www.psnl.police.uk/crime/theft/house-  
security](http://www.psnl.police.uk/crime/theft/house-security)

## Visitors

Before opening the door, check visitors by observation, video phone, external camera or intercom. Ask friends and relatives to inform you of intended visits.

Arrange fixed times for trades people to call; check their identity on arrival and never leave them alone in the house.

Be wary of unexpected callers to your home.

A fixed arm door limiter will allow you to open the door a little way to speak to a caller without opening the door.

## Key Care

Do not leave a key under the doormat, in a mailbox or in other obvious hiding places. It is better to give adult members of the household their own keys.

Improvements in keyless technology now allows the user to gain entry to a property

or vehicle using a fob that emits a signal to release the locking device.

Criminals have identified that a 'relay' can replicate the signal to unlock the mechanism. This means they can gain entry illegally to your property or vehicle.

To reduce this risk of compromise for both keyless and conventional keys the following should be applied:

Keep keys out of sight, away from doors and windows and not easily reached from outside

Keys should be kept in a secure, accessible place in case of fire

Keyless fobs should be kept in a signal blocking pouch or faraday bag

## The Telephone

Your telephone should be sited in a place where you cannot be observed using it from outside. It is also advisable to:

- **Consider using a bedside telephone extension to make and receive calls. Keep your mobile phone with you when you retire for the night**
- **Report an out of order telephone at once. Be vigilant until the connection is restored**
- **Keep a list of emergency numbers near**

**your telephone**

- **Make sure you and other members of the family or staff exercise discretion when answering the telephone. No information should be given regarding your whereabouts or future appointments. The caller's name and telephone number should be taken, so that you can return the call**
- **Make your telephone number ex-directory**
- **Keep a notepad and pen by your phone**

## Direct Marketing Removal

Whilst 100% success is not guaranteed, the Telephone Preference Service provides a free service that helps you to avoid UK based telemarketing calls by removing your information from direct marketing databases. [www.tpsonline.org.uk](http://www.tpsonline.org.uk)

For further information:

[www.getsafeonline.org](http://www.getsafeonline.org)

[www.192.com/misc/privacy-policy](http://www.192.com/misc/privacy-policy)

If you have suffered a bereavement, or just want to stop unsolicited mail, register online for free with the Mailing Preference Service (MPS): [www.mpsonline.org.uk](http://www.mpsonline.org.uk)

[psauthority.org.uk](http://psauthority.org.uk) - useful if you spot a number on your bill which you are not sure about.



## Neighbourhood Watch

Neighbourhood Watch is a scheme for local residents who agree to keep an eye out for anything suspicious and tell one another or the police. It helps to reduce crime and the opportunities for crime. It is a good way to help people feel more secure in their neighbourhoods and encourages closer communities.

For more information visit:

**[www.psni.police.uk/my-area/neighbourhood-watch](http://www.psni.police.uk/my-area/neighbourhood-watch)**

**[www.ourwatch.org.uk](http://www.ourwatch.org.uk)**

**[www.psni.police.uk/advice-information/protecting-your-home](http://www.psni.police.uk/advice-information/protecting-your-home)**

## Anonymous Calls and Telephone Threats

Anonymous calls and telephone threats are usually intended to lower your moral or cause fear, alarm and distress. An accurate analysis of such calls may provide valuable clues on which to base recommendations, action and subsequent investigation.

A natural reaction on hearing a hostile voice when answering the telephone is to hang up.

However, the following action should be taken:

- Stay calm and listen carefully.
- Record the call if you are able to do so.
- Keep the caller talking and alert someone to dial 999.
- Keep a note pad and pen to hand and write down details immediately. This may assist police later.
- Listen for clues as to the caller's intention, or the specific threat.
- Note the caller's user name.
- If the threat is received via text message do not reply to, forward, or delete the message.
- Note the caller's number, otherwise dial BT 1471 to obtain the number once the call has ended.
- If you are receiving calls of an annoying, indecent or insulting nature, you should:
- Consider contacting your service provider - who can be very helpful.
- Consider using a caller display telephone, which allows you to screen calls before you answer them.
- Consider contacting the police - there are procedures in place to investigate such incidents.
- A prosecution may be brought where the identity of the caller is known or can be ascertained.
- If you are persistently receiving silent calls, do not say anything when you answer.
- Legitimate callers will identify themselves and if it is the malicious caller you can hang up.

## Mobile Telephones

Protect your mobile from opportunist theft with the following:

Think about the activities you use your device for such as on-line banking, personal emails, social media and photographs. Could these be made public or used against you? How do you list and identify telephone numbers and other contact details for, family, friends and colleagues to keep personal information and details secure?

Consider using all of the security facilities available on your phone including SIM password protection and consider changing the default PIN for your voicemail access.

Change passwords regularly and do not disclose them to others.

Be aware that public Wi-Fi hot-spots may not be secure.

Consider disabling your Wi-Fi and Bluetooth connections when not in use and disable location services where possible. Review your privacy settings to prevent someone tracking your movements and identifying your home address, or place of work.

## Phone Security

For more information:

**[www.getsafeonline.org](http://www.getsafeonline.org)**

**[www.psni.police.uk/crime/fraud/scamwise-ni](http://www.psni.police.uk/crime/fraud/scamwise-ni)**



# The Internet and Social Networking Sites

The internet has become such an integral part of everyday life that it can be easy to forget the importance of personal security and vigilance when using this medium.

Social networking sites, such as Facebook and Twitter, are huge targets for preying cyber-criminals. By abusing the nature of such sites, criminals are able to access information and personal details that users have made publicly available. Such activity is known as social engineering, and is one of the first stages of many cyber-attacks related to identity theft. So, **please remember that the information placed on such sites is not secure and could be viewed by anyone**, including those who may wish to harm you or your family, friends or colleagues. The responsibility rests with you to ensure whatever is disclosed does not put anyone at risk.

**You should not include personal details such as:**

- **Mobile phone numbers**
- **Private home addresses**
- **Personal or work addresses**
- **Employment details**
- **Family members**
- **Hobbies and places frequented**
- **Vehicle details**

To avoid putting other people at risk, photographs of family, friends and colleagues should only be published with your consent and theirs. If applicable, published photographs should not reveal your occupation, home or place of work. By using either electronic or facial 'tagging' of photographs found on social networking sites, technology can be used to discover your personal details, your home or possibly your current location.

There is no reason why you cannot use the internet or social networking sites; and by following the above simple rules you can reduce the risk to yourself and others when doing so.

## General computer security

**If you use IT devices, for example, a smartphone, laptop, or personal computer you may wish to protect them from theft, damage and on-line access of personal information and data.**

**To reduce any risk it is essential that you consider the following:**

- Use a computer firewall and run system scans regularly
- Use a reputable computer anti-virus programme and keep it updated
- Be cautious when using third party applications (Malicious codes known as 'malware' can spread rapidly around social networks) or via email
- Inspect your user profile privacy and security options within the site (Facebook recently introduced a facility to allow you to download a copy of your uploaded information - so you can see what others see)
- Do not open emails from unknown or suspicious senders

- Check the security protection of your home and business Wi-Fi networks. Change the default (manufacturer) passcode
- Do not rename Wi-Fi using identifying details such as your family name
- Use a hard-to-guess password and never write it down. Do not tell anyone your password
- Do not use the same password for all security log-on purposes
- Treat all email attachments with caution
- Use software controls that ensure only reputable websites can be accessed, reducing the risk of malicious software being installed on the system
- Where it exists, turn off the option to automatically download attachments to emails
- Implement effective filtering across internet gateways (e.g.: spam blockers, firewall and anti-virus software). Make sure that the latest updates to these and the operating system are promptly installed
- Shred paper, CDs and DVDs before disposal if they contain sensitive information.

**For further information:**

Forward suspicious texts to 7726 and phishing emails to: **report@phishing.gov.uk**

**www.actionfraud.org.uk**  
Action Fraud: Telephone 0300 123 2040

Videos and leaflets: **www.met.police.uk/littlemedia**

National Crime Agency (NCA):  
**www.ncsc.gov.uk/cyberaware/home**

Advice on how to help children use the internet safely:  
**www.internetmatters.org**

Information Commissioner's Office:  
**www.ico.org.uk**

**www.ncsc.gov.uk/guidance/setting-two-factor-authentication-2fa**

Cyber-security Intelligence Sharing Platform (CiSP): **www.ncsc.gov/cisp**

Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure (CPNI) **www.cpni.gov.uk**

Report suspicious activity at Action Counters Terrorism (ACT).  
**www.act.campaign.gov.uk**

Advice and tips for small businesses to improve their online security.  
**www.cyberstreetwise.com**

**Scams**

If you believe you have been the victim of a scam consider the following:

In the first instance, contact your bank immediately on a number you know to be correct, such as the one listed on your statement, their website or on the back of your debit or credit card

Report scams, cyber-crime and frauds in the UK to Action Fraud, either online at **www.actionfraud.police.uk** or by telephone on 0300 123 2040. The Action Fraud website allows you to make reports regarding phishing emails you have received or malware that has affected your computer system or device

If you are deaf or hard of hearing you can use text phone 0300 123 2050. If you are in Northern Ireland you can also report to the PSNI directly by calling 101 or visiting **www.psni.police.uk/makeareport**

Every report assists police investigations, provides intelligence, informs national alerts that protect all communities, disrupts criminals and reduces harm. In the UK you can forward scam text message to OFCOM on 7726 (free of charge) and forward suspicious emails to **report@phishing.gov.uk**. Remember to share your experience with friends and family to make sure they don't fall for the same scam.

**Remember**

**SCAM:**

**Seems too good to be true**  
**Contacted out of the blue**  
**Asked for personal details**  
**Money requested**

For further information and advice on scams:  
**www.nidirect.gov.uk/scamwiseni**  
**www.takefive-stopfraud.org.uk**



# Security Away From Home

## Travelling in General

For the latest information about foreign travel, and for advice on safety, security, entry requirements and travel warnings, visit: **[www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice](http://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice)**

Be alert to dangers that may be encountered while travelling - particularly on entering or leaving your own home.

If possible, avoid setting patterns in your travel arrangements that may make it easy for anyone to predict your whereabouts.

Vary your routes and times as much as possible.

Consider carrying a fully charged mobile phone and a portable power charger and check you are in credit.

Make sure someone at home knows your route and the time you expect to return. If your arrival is overdue, arrange for this person to report it to the police. Keep the person advised of any delays.

Do not go to the same restaurant or place of entertainment consistently. This establishes a pattern that will become obvious to anyone interested in your movements.

Make ticket or restaurant reservations in a name other than your own.

Travelling in company is safer than travelling alone.

For more information:

**[www.nidirect.gov.uk/contacts/crimestoppers](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/contacts/crimestoppers)**

**[www.suzylamplugh.org](http://www.suzylamplugh.org)**

Make a habit of checking the road before leaving your residence.

Note any suspicious or strange vehicles and report these to police.

Contact the police immediately if you think you are being followed. If you can, make your way towards the nearest open police station. Do not drive home.

Do not publicise your movements. Restrict details to as few people as necessary on the 'need to know' principle.

Contact local police where there is advance publicity of your visit to an area that you consider sensitive. If necessary, arrangements will be made to give attention to your visit.

Never leave laptops, documents or papers in unattended vehicles. (They may identify you or your employer.)

Before travelling, make sure that someone at home knows:

- A contact telephone number
- Where you are going
- Whom you are going to see
- How you will travel
- When you expect to arrive and when you expect to return
- What to do in the event of undue delay

## Walking

You may be vulnerable when walking alone at night but stay alert at all times of the day. Plan ahead. Before you go out, think about how you are going to reach your destination and how you are going to get home. Spread your valuables around keeping them in different places such as your bag, jacket and trousers. It is a good idea to keep valuables such as wallets in an inside pocket. Walk on brightly lit, well travelled streets as much as possible.

If you must walk in a poorly lit street, stay near the kerb and well away from shrubbery, dark doorways and other places of concealment.

Avoid short cuts through vacant lots, deserted parks and unlit alleys. If you are at all worried, try and stay near a group of people. Remember if you are talking on your mobile phone or wearing audio/noise cancelling headphones, you will not be aware of potential problems near you. Try to keep both hands free and do not walk with your hand in your pockets.

Be alert to your surroundings. Keep away from anyone of whom you are suspicious. Try to be as inconspicuous as possible in public places.

Vary walking or running routes, and vary times.

If you think you are being followed, stay in a public place and contact the police. Consider using other places of safety that may be accessible. Provide friends and family with alternative ways to contact you and advise them of any delays. If your arrival is overdue tell them to report it to the police. If you feel worried, consider heading to a public place and or somewhere you know there will be other people, for example a garage or shop.



## UVIED's (Under Vehicle improvised Explosive Devices)

Make car inspection a daily routine if UVIED's are likely to be a threat to you.

UVIED's take many forms, but they are usually simple devices that can be detected through routine inspection. (It should be remembered that attackers can go to great lengths to construct cleverly disguised devices.)

Check underneath your car before using it in the morning or, if appropriate, when the vehicle has been left unattended for prolonged periods.

Do not take it for granted that your car is as safe as when you left it. It only takes a few seconds to plant a device.

Avoid drawing attention to your vehicle by displaying cherished vehicle registration plates or by choosing or adding distinctive features (e.g: large spoilers, stand-out colours, particularly unusual alloy wheels). Familiarise yourself with the underside of your vehicle and the wheel arches; you will then be better placed to recognise anything that ought not to be there.

### Common places for UVIED's are:

- On the ground - underneath, or near the vehicle
- In front, on top or behind a wheel or mudguard
- Attached to the exhaust or underside of the vehicle

Remember disturbed ground around the car may indicate that an explosive device has been buried or planted there.

Carry a torch with which to check your vehicle after dark.

Where possible, secure all locks and petrol tank access.

At home or in work, park your car in a locked garage or a secure parking area. If neither of these is an option, leave your vehicle where it can be seen by the general public.

Simple precautions can make it more difficult for anyone to attach anything to your car or place anything in it that is designed to cause harm or injury.

Do not allow anyone near your vehicle before you have checked it thoroughly and are satisfied there is nothing untoward or suspicious.

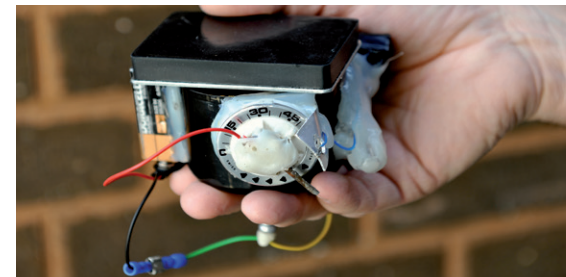
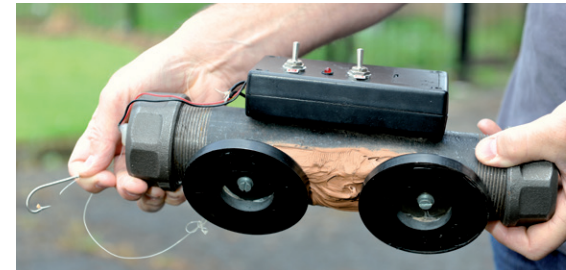
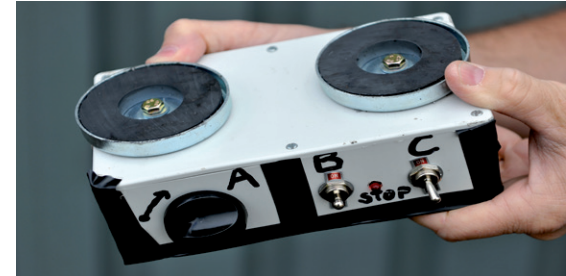
*Opposite are photographs that might assist in the identification of UVIED's. However this is not an exhaustive or definitive list.*

## If you discover a suspicious item:

- Do not attempt to touch or remove the object.
- Move away to a safe area (at least 100m)
- Do not use any mobile phone, in the immediate vicinity.
- Report it to the police immediately by phoning 999 on a landline.

## On the Move by Vehicle

- When you are driving, use common sense and be alert to the possibility of sudden danger.
- As far as possible, vary your route and times of departure to avoid setting a pattern.
- Keep car doors and boot locked when driving.
- Ensure car windows are fully closed when you are parked and opened only enough for ventilation when you are driving.
- Look forward along parked vehicles in the street or road for anything of a suspicious nature and via your driving mirrors, for vehicles following behind.
- Keep to main routes as much as possible.
- Avoid contentious areas in times of public disorder.
- Drive your car at a steady speed.
- Keep your distance from the car in front of you.
- Do not leave documents or belongings unattended in your vehicle.



Do not allow yourself to be boxed in. On the approach to traffic lights allow enough room for manoeuvre or, if possible, adjust your speed to avoid stopping.

If something untoward appears to be taking place on the road ahead, stop and turn if it is safe to do so.

Ensure that you have sufficient fuel to avoid stopping at unknown or isolated petrol stations.

Do not open windows or doors or offer lifts to people you don't know.

Be wary if you experience a flat tyre. Drive to a safe place before stopping. If possible, get off the road altogether but try to avoid becoming isolated.

Be wary of collision scenes. They may be staged to cause you to stop.

Do not leave your car unattended if you can avoid it.

## Taxis

### Make sure your taxi is legal

Do not use a taxi if:

The vehicle is not displaying the proper taxi licence signs or plates.

The driver has no ID badge – licensed taxi drivers should always wear this badge showing their licence number

### Booking a taxi

Always carry the telephone number, or have downloaded the app of a reliable taxi company when you go out.

Many taxi firms now have apps for booking where you can see the vehicle registration, make and model, a picture of the driver and the progress of the route which can be shared with a friend to allow them to monitor your journey. This is a good way of keeping safe especially when traveling alone.

If booking a taxi, confirm on its arrival, that the taxi is for you by checking the driver knows your name and destination.

You should also always:

Try to pre-book at busy times, or if you have special requirements, including use of a wheelchair, or if you have an assistance dog

If possible do not use waiting taxis and try to wait in a busy and well-lit area

Ask how much the fare is likely to be (if the taxi has a taximeter, the exact fare will not be known until the end of the journey)

Check the fare card displayed in the taxi against the taximeter reading (where there is a taximeter) to make sure the fare you are charged is the correct amount

### Travelling in a taxi

Try to plan your journey in advance

When in a taxi you should wear your seatbelt.

If you are in any doubt about your safety, do not get into the taxi.

Be aware, that for their own safety, some taxi drivers have installed cameras that record the behaviour of passengers. Views may be taken from the front and rear of the vehicle and images of you, other occupants and, for example, your home may be recorded.

Consider alternative pick-up or drop-off points other than your home, or place of work and don't wear anything that would disclose your occupation.

Do not share a taxi with someone you don't know.

If using a taxi or chauffeured service, consider changing your position in the car. Sit in the front seat occasionally.

Give your chauffeur/taxi driver clear instructions as to what route to take, but do not give notice of your route in advance.

Call and book ahead so there is a record of your booking.

Share information about your journey and the vehicle you are using with someone you trust.

Confirm on its arrival that the taxi is for you by checking the driver knows your name and destination.

A personal chauffeur should be encouraged to become security conscious.

Advise him or her of the relevant security measures suggested here.

For further advice and guidance:

**[www.suzylamplugh.org](http://www.suzylamplugh.org)**

**If you think you are being followed, keep a lookout in your rear-view mirror.**

- Try to keep calm. Keep the vehicle moving, even if only slowly
- Contact the police if you have a mobile phone or radio
- Close the windows and make sure the doors and boot are locked

Make a safe detour to check if you are being followed - do not deviate to an unknown route on which you may become lost.

Note details of the suspect vehicle and give these to the police, try to record the registration number.

Keep your distance from any obstacle. Ensure you have adequate space for evasive action if you have to slow down or stop.

To get attention, switch on your hazard warning lights and/or use the horn.

Do not drive home, drive to the nearest open police station or other place of safety and report the incident.



## Rail, Sea, Air and Other Public Transport

Avoid talking on your mobile while walking and keep alert and aware of your surroundings.

If travelling by train, enter a compartment that is already occupied. Try to be where a CCTV camera can see you. Do not put your wallet, phone or passport in your back pocket.

Check timetables to limit your waiting time especially during off peak periods and stay in well lit areas.

If you can, keep locked luggage where you can see it. Do not take responsibility for the luggage of people you do not know.

If you have to surrender your luggage - make sure you get the right bags back. Don't open them unless you are confident they have not been tampered with.

If you are a visitor to the area, try to keep your camera, phone and map out of sight as much as possible.

When travelling by ship, be cautious about walking on deck at night.

Try to obtain a cabin and ensure that the door is kept locked at all times.

Arrange to be met at your destination.

## Hotels

Ensure that the hotel has been booked through your organisation's approved process or through a reputable travel provider.

At reception, try to avoid other people hearing your name and room number.

Where possible, avoid regularly using the same hotel.

Never see visitors in your hotel room if they are not known to you and their identity and bona fides cannot be confirmed. Meet them in a public room where others will be present. (This includes members of the press.)

Be wary of hotel paging. It is advisable to prearrange with the hotel for callers to leave their name and contact details with reception. This will reduce the risk of identification and possible attack.

Know the fire and escape route options.

Hotel safes can be useful for securing valuable items such as currency and jewellery but do not use them to store sensitive or personal information.

# Delivered Items

## Suspect Packages and Hazardous substances

Postal bombs can be just a few millimetres thick or may be considerably larger. Toxic substances may also be sent through the postal system. Remember such packages may explode on opening, so look for:

- **The Postmark** - and the name and address of the sender. Do you normally get letters or parcels from this source?
- **The Writing** - Do you recognise it?
- **The Balance** - Is it evenly balanced? If the letter or parcel is an irregular shape, treat as suspect
- **The Weight** - If this seems to be excessive in relation to size, treat as suspect
- **Holes** - Are there any punctures or tears that could have been made by wires? If so, treat as suspect
- **Stains** - Are there any stains or grease marks that could be caused by 'sweating' explosives? If so, treat as suspect

- **The Smell** - Some explosives have an aroma of marzipan or almonds
- **The Feel** - In the case of letters, this will indicate if the envelope is likely to contain only folded paper. If the letter is more rigid - e.g. contains cardboard or metal, treat as suspect
- **The Outline** - Can you see unusual shapes when you hold it up to the light? If so, treat as suspect
- **The Flap** - Is the flap of the envelope stuck down completely? Are there any gaps?

If in doubt call 999 and ask for the police. Clear the area of all people immediately. Never try to open the letter or package. Do not bend it or place it in water.

Remember to have a Suspect Packages and Hazardous Substances Evacuation Plan incorporated into your Fire Escape Plan.

Ensure everyone is aware of what to do in an emergency.



For further information:

[www.psni.police.uk/advice\\_information/action-counters-terrorism](http://www.psni.police.uk/advice_information/action-counters-terrorism)

[www.cpni.gov.uk](http://www.cpni.gov.uk)

[www.gov.uk/government/organisations/national-counter-terrorism-security-office](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/national-counter-terrorism-security-office)

## Hazardous substances

A hazardous substance can be any substance, whether solid, liquid or gas, that may cause harm. Hazardous substances are classified on the basis of their potential health effects, whether acute (immediate) or chronic (long term).

If you think someone has been exposed to a hazardous substance, use caution and keep a safe distance to avoid exposure yourself. REPORT immediately to the emergency services by dialling 999. Be aware of your surroundings and move away from suspicious items.

ACT QUICKLY. Quick actions could save lives

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/remove-guidance-on-removing-hazardous-substances](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/remove-guidance-on-removing-hazardous-substances)

### Tell those affected to:

- Remove themselves from the immediate area to avoid further exposure to the substance
- Move into fresh air
- If skin is itching or in pain find a water source and continually rinse with water
- Remove outer clothing carefully. Try to avoid pulling clothing over the head. Do not pull off clothing stuck to the skin
- Do not smoke, eat or drink

## Suspicious Behaviour

Suspicious behaviour is activity by an individual, or individuals that for any reason comes to another's attention.

It is generally activity, behaviour or language which in some way seems out of the ordinary for the particular circumstances.

### Examples of suspicious activity includes:

- Someone being in a restricted area, or trying to gain access without a pass or unaccompanied by a verified official
- Someone taking video or photographs where it not expected
- An individual consciously trying to conceal their identity when approached

- Vehicles being parked where they should not be
- Behaviour that is not what would be expected in the environment

Such activity should be reported immediately to management who in turn should advise the relevant authorities.

When you are recording suspicious activity a useful mnemonic is **SALUTE**:

**S** Situation: who or what was picked up on

**A** Activity: what was happening, what was the person or vehicle doing

**L** Location: where was the activity taking place?

**U** Unit: who made the observation?

**T** Time: when did the activity take place?

**E** Equipment. Is there equipment that can assist in the evaluation of the incident? For example: CCTV location, access control, emails, and telephone calls

Phone 101 for advice. Call the police on 999 for an emergency. It is an emergency if it is suspected that the observed activity will result in immediate danger to people or property.



# Children and Family

Keep young children within sight or earshot, or ensure they are in the care of a trustworthy adult (who is aware of the threat they may be under). Ensure this person knows what precautions to take.

## Tell your children

- To check if they know callers before opening the door to them
- Not to open the door to strangers and to fetch an adult quickly to deal with such callers
- To invite people home only if they have known them well for some time (unless they have checked first with you or the adult to whom their care is entrusted)
- To travel in groups or pairs and to use only well lit main roads when they are not under adult supervision
- At school, to play in supervised areas within the grounds
- At an early age, when and how to alert police and neighbours
- To refuse gifts, lifts, or approaches of any kind from strangers
- To report immediately any such incidents to a responsible adult
- To keep you informed of where they are and who they are with
- To exercise caution when meeting strangers
- To exercise caution when answering the telephone; otherwise, they may give out information that could place you at risk

## Ensure that:

You make arrangements with the school to contact you before allowing anyone else to collect your child.

The childminder you employ is reliable and well acquainted with 'door opening' and 'telephone answering' procedures and how to raise an alarm if necessary.

Victim Support NI is an independent charity supporting people affected by crime offering a free and confidential service: **[www.victimsupportni.com](http://www.victimsupportni.com)**

If a young person under 19 in the UK wants to talk about any issue they are going through they can contact 'Childline' for free and in confidence **[www.childline.org.uk/](http://www.childline.org.uk/)** Telephone 0800 1111 any time, day or night

Women's Aid is the national charity working to end domestic abuse against women and children **[www.womensaid.org.uk](http://www.womensaid.org.uk)**

Prevention of Young Suicide **[www.papyrus-uk.org](http://www.papyrus-uk.org)**

Helping to protect children and young people from online child sexual abuse. **[www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)**

The Public Health Agency (HSC) provides a directory of services to help improve mental health and emotional wellbeing: **[www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/directory-services-help-improve-mental-health-and-emotional-wellbeing](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/directory-services-help-improve-mental-health-and-emotional-wellbeing)**

For more information about your child's safety in the home:

**[www.nidirect.gov.uk/information-and-services/safety-home/your-childs-safety-home](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/information-and-services/safety-home/your-childs-safety-home)**

For more information about Children's Personal Safety Online: **[www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)**

Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP): **[www.ceop.police.uk](http://www.ceop.police.uk)**

For victims of sexual abuse who have a learning disability **[www.justusni.org](http://www.justusni.org)**  
The Just US Card is for people with a learning disability or autism who need to speak to the police. You can use this card to share important information about yourself and how you like to communicate.

National Domestic Abuse Helpline for women, men and children **[www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk](http://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk)**  
Freephone, 24 hr national domestic abuse helpline 0808 2000 247

The Men's Advice Line for male domestic abuse survivors **[www.respect.uk.net](http://www.respect.uk.net)**

The Mix: **[www.themix.org.uk](http://www.themix.org.uk)**

National LGBT+ Domestic Abuse: **[www.galop.org.uk](http://www.galop.org.uk)**

Samaritans help available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

NSPCC Child Protection **[www.learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-protection-system/northern-ireland](http://www.learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-protection-system/northern-ireland)**

**[www.nihe.gov.uk/Documents/Community/hate\\_harassment\\_toolkit](http://www.nihe.gov.uk/Documents/Community/hate_harassment_toolkit)**



# Physical Threats

## Firearms and weapons attack

Whilst terrorist attacks, hijacking, kidnapping and hostage taking incidents are rare, in the event of such an attack, it helps to be prepared. Should such an attack occur, remember the words: Run, Hide & Tell.

### Run

- Escape if you can
- Consider the safest options
- Is there a safe route? If there is a safe route, Run. If there is not a safe route, Hide
- A safe route means you can get there without exposing yourself to greater danger
- Insist others leave with you, but do not let their decision slow you down
- Leave belongings behind
- Do not attempt to film the incident. Run

### Hide

- If you cannot Run or Hide take cover from gunfire such as behind brickwork or heavy reinforced walls.
- If you can see the attacker, they may be able to see you. Cover from view does not mean you are safe. Bullets go through glass, wood and metal. Remember to hide even if you are behind a locked door and to move away from the door
- Be aware of your exits
- Try not to get trapped
- Be quiet
- Silence your phone and turn off vibrate



### Tell

- **Call 999**
- Raise an alarm
- **Give police the following information:**
  - Nature of the incident:** What is happening?
  - Location:** Where is the incident taking place? Give an address, landmark, direction, building, floor number
  - Suspects:** Where are they? How many are there? What direction are they going in?
  - Descriptions?** Weapons? What are they doing? What are they saying?
  - Other** information: Entrances, Exits, Smoke, Fire, Casualties, Hostages, Number of people inside
- If it is safe to do so Stop other people entering the building
- If you cannot speak or make a noise listen to the instructions given to you by the call taker

## Armed Police Response

Follow police officers instructions:

- Remain calm
- Avoid sudden movements that may be considered a threat
- Keep your hands in view

### Police may:

- Point guns at you
- Treat you firmly
- Question you
- Evacuate you

## Plan and Prepare for an incident

Remember to have an emergency evacuation plan.

Ensure family and work colleagues know the plan.

Practice the plan and make sure everyone has first aid training.



# Publicity and the Media

Avoid revealing details about personal circumstances that might be useful to a terrorist or criminal.

It is impossible to provide advice for every eventuality. However, here are some examples of the kind of publicity you should avoid.

If possible, home addresses and other identifying details should be excluded from publications, such as 'Who's Who' or other easily obtainable sources. Home telephone numbers should be ex-directory.

Where agreement is made to grant interviews to the press on private premises or to the publication of articles about the private lives of interviewees or their families, the media should be asked not to publish details that could help to identify a home address or way of life.

## Demonstrations

If your identity is established, it is possible that protesters may gather at your home. They may assemble close to your property boundary or in your garden and commence a noisy protest.

If this happens:

- Stay calm - such protests may intimidate but will not necessarily lead to a physical threat
- Remain in your home
- Close and lock doors and windows and draw the curtains
- Inform the police using the 999 system
- Inform your workplace/colleagues
- Do not, in any way, respond to or antagonise the protesters; remain indoors and out of sight. Avoid confrontation
- If possible, note descriptions of individuals and vehicles present
- If you have a CCTV system fitted that has recorded images of protesters, you should hand any footage obtained over to the police; it may assist with identification and provide evidence in cases where offences have been committed
- Postpone any expected visitors
- Wait for the arrival of police

## Leafleting Campaigns

Your neighbours may receive letters or leaflets describing in extreme terms the work that you do. Most people, whatever their personal view on the subject at issue, will be sympathetic towards anyone who is being victimised.

You may want to talk to your neighbours. Material should be passed to police. All incidents should be logged and reported to police and to your employer.

It is impossible to provide advice to cater for every eventuality but the following are some examples of the kind of publicity which should be avoided or controlled:

- Home addresses and other identifying details should be excluded from business publication and online networks
- Work related press releases publicity materials and website content should be reviewed to see if any information can be removed or amended to protect individuals.
- Television camera crews and press photographers should not generally be allowed to enter private homes.
- The electoral roll is a source for commercial companies to obtain your personal information. You can seek advice on how to protect this information from your local authority.
- If you have professional membership of any business-related organisation, ask them not to publish your full details or if they do, to put them on a password-protected area of the site.

For further information:

**[www.gov.uk/electoral-register/opt-out-of-the-open-register](http://www.gov.uk/electoral-register/opt-out-of-the-open-register)**

**[www.ico.org.uk/your-data-matters](http://www.ico.org.uk/your-data-matters)**

## Buying Vehicles

When buying or selling a vehicle you should think about security.

Protect yourself by:

- Arranging to meet the person at an open public location where you feel safe
- Consider the method of payment and avoid carrying large amounts of cash
- Check the registration numbers on the front and back of the vehicle
- Check chassis numbers, logbook, mileage, make and model, MOT
- When selling disconnect your electronic devices from the vehicle's pairing (Bluetooth) system and delete any information that may be left
- Delete information from the car navigation system
- Use the DVLA's free vehicle on line checker at: **[www.gov.uk/get-vehicle-information-from-dvla](http://www.gov.uk/get-vehicle-information-from-dvla)** to find out what information the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency holds about a vehicle and that it matches what the seller is telling you.
- You will need the vehicle's registration number to make these checks.

For more information:

**[www.thatcham.org](http://www.thatcham.org)**  
**[www.gov.uk/responsibilities-selling-vehicle](http://www.gov.uk/responsibilities-selling-vehicle)**

# Summary

If, in spite of the precautions you have taken, an attack has been made or attempted, it is essential that you do the following:

- Alert police immediately
- Follow police instructions and requests
- Never touch anything at the scene
- Only give information to the police
- Never give an attacker a ransom or make a private arrangement

# Contacting the Police Service of Northern Ireland

Call 999 in an emergency where you need immediate assistance or feel threatened

In an emergency for text phone users dial  
18000

**An emergency is where serious injury has been caused or a crime is in progress and the suspects are at, or near the scene**

Call 101 in a non-emergency where you need assistance or advice

Outside the UK Dial 004428 90650222

For details on how to contact police,  
including online incident reporting visit:

**[www.psni.police.uk/contact-us](http://www.psni.police.uk/contact-us)**

If you have been a witness to a crime and wish to remain anonymous please contact **[www.crimestoppers-uk.org/give-information](http://www.crimestoppers-uk.org/give-information)**  
Telephone Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

## Notes

Notes

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....





**psni.police.uk**



Created by Police Service of Northern Ireland Strategic Communications and Engagement Department SCE0715/22