

Urban Survival

Surviving in an urban environment...

Statistically, young men are more likely to be victims of robbery or violence. However, the following points apply to both females and males alike, regardless of age. Much of it is common sense.

Keep your bags closed and close to your body, where possible blend in. Does your expensive laptop case containing your zillion gig lappy really need advertising? How about carrying it in a non de-script rucksack?

Don't be flash with your gadgets, be discreet, do you need a ring tone that sounds like a disco at 300yds?

Better to have it toned down or on vibrate, brings less attention to you. If your going to be buying that kebab after being on the juice then place your money in a pocket before going into the kebab shop. When you come to pay you have a tenner on show, not a wallet full of cards and notes.

MP3 players are cool, put your earphones in, wind up the volume and don't hear me creeping up on you!

Keep your cards, cash and valuables in different pockets.

Try and blend in with the area you are visiting, that Gucci suit and snazzy shoes will bring all the wrong attention to you if you stumble off the beaten tracks.

Don't walk like a victim. By this I mean keep your head up as you walk. Next time your out look at people, most walk about staring at the floor and hate eye contact. Try and stay to well lit roads, if your approaching a darkened area cross over before you get to it. This gives you room to react if something happens.

Be aware of your surroundings at all time, road side furniture offers you a barrier if needed but sometimes offers the nasty people somewhere to hide. If you see a group of people and feel uneasy then give them a wide berth. Again, this gives you a chance to react if you have to. But try not to act like a scared animal and scurry away. This will have the wrong affect and may bring you even more unwanted attention.

If you are confronted by someone who is aggressive or whom makes you uneasy then try and remain calm and maintain a distance of at least 2 arm lengths from them.

This is called the reactionary gap. This gap offers you safety and should be maintained at all times. It gives you room for fight or flight. Do not act submissive, be assertive and confident but don't get cocky. Valuables can be replaced, you can't be.

Try and maintain a mental record of the suspect(s), if it gets physical you will encounter tunnel vision and partial loss of hearing. This is normal behaviour. Condition your mind, you will get hurt.

At the earliest opportunity get away and be vocal. When safe to do so examine yourself, that blow in the back may have been a stab. Of course, in an ideal world we would choose

P2S NETWORK PUBLICATION

the flight and not the fight.

Try and stick to using ATM's in daylight hours, always be aware of who is around.

Before you put your card in the slot, have a look at the ATM, if there is anything strange looking then don't use it. Eastern European criminals use a fake "front" on ATM's that can scan your card or keep it, they also usually have an overhead covert CCTV camera to record your PIN.

If you notice anything suspicious then report it to Police. Make sure you put your card and money away before walking off.

It's night time and you have just been woken up by a strange noise. Listen to what's happening (keep your mouth open as it helps), if you think there are intruders then pick up the landline and dial 999. If you don't have a phone in the bedroom then get one.

If you dial 999 and are too scared to speak then put the phone down on the side (not hanging up). Police will be dispatched to your address by the emergency operator. It will be classed as an abandoned call for assistance.

If you have children in the house then gather them in to your room and await Police. Don't do what they do in films and investigate, you may come a cropper. Better to let them come to you if that's their intention. Your door way will be a choke point for them.

When driving keep a good gap between you and the vehicle in front. If you come to a standstill due to traffic lights etc. then make sure you can see the bottom of their rear tyres. This gap will give you room to manoeuvre should the need arise.

If using car parks then reverse park. Again this gives you room to react.

Consider driving with the doors locked.

If a vehicle flashes you don't become intimidated, do not speed up. If you believe they may be plain clothes Police then wait for them to use their blues and twos. Even unmarked cars are equipped. Otherwise continue driving and pull over in a populated and well lit area, petrol station etc. Do not get out, let them come to you. Ensure the doors are locked and only wind down the window enough for you to hear what they are saying, keep the engine running and be ready to drive off if threatened.

Above all else use your common sense and be safe.