

An Garda Síochána

Crime Prevention Information Sheet



Personal Safety Holiday Security



Introduction

This leaflet addresses three keys areas relating to your holiday security as follows -

- Preparation plans and securing your property
- Safety when travelling
- Protecting your children



Holiday scene—playing Boules in France

Preparation Plans and Securing your property

Before you go:

- Find out about the place you are visiting. Is it safe for visitors? Are there any local laws or customs, which are different to home, that you should be aware of?
- Be familiar with security measures at airports and/or seaports. Many common household items cannot be carried as hand luggage on planes.
- Inform a trusted neighbour or relative as to your travel arrangements, intended destination and contact details. Do not unwittingly advertise your travel arrangements to others, particularly on social media.
- Invite neighbours to make use of your driveway for car parking.
- Arrange to have your lawn mowed, particularly when absent for long periods in summer.

- Cancel your milk, paper deliveries etc.
- Arrange for a neighbour or relative to collect your mail or use Mail minder from An Post.
- Make full use of light timing / smart devices and do not have curtains drawn during the day time. Your neighbour may oblige with this duty.
- If you have a domestic alarm – inform your monitoring centre of your absence and ensure any nominated key holders will attend promptly to any activation.
- Be aware of any insurance limitations on vacant premises.
- Notify your local Gardaí of your absence from home.
- Invest in a quality safe for any valuables left in your home. Speak to your insurers about appropriate safe ratings for your valuables.
- Carry out a “housekeeping” exercise around the grounds of your home and remove and secure any unsecured items.

Safety when travelling –

- Use your work address on items of luggage.
- Record separately details of the following items:
 - Your passport and driving licence.
 - All credit and bank cards.
 - Travel documents.
 - Emergency contact numbers for each of these services. If you have a mobile phone, these contact numbers should be saved on the phone using international access prefixes.
- Have your vehicle fully serviced prior to departure and ensure you have replacement bulbs, emergency equipment etc.
- If you are using a roof rack for luggage, park only in secure car parks and remove it when not necessary.
- Know where you are going and, if you need to stop, use only established service station areas.
- Be cautious of stopping for strangers or “persons in trouble” – call the Gardaí or local police.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON THIS OR OTHER CRIME PREVENTION ISSUES,
PLEASE CONTACT
your local GARDÁ CRIME PREVENTION OFFICER
or
visit the Garda website at www.garda.ie**

- Remove all valuables, maps etc. inside your car and place them in the boot.
- Carry a mobile phone and know how to contact the emergency services in the area you are visiting. Know where you are if they need to locate you.
- At your destination hotel, camp-site etc. - be very conscious that you are easily identifiable by criminal elements as a visitor/tourist. It is important that you lock and secure your room and valuables and never leave keys on display.
- Never carry all your cash/valuables with you. Use the hotel safe where possible.
- Don't flaunt or advertise your wealth - thieves will be watching for this.



Holiday Street Scene

Protecting your children

- Teach your children your full address and contact telephone numbers including how to call the Gardaí or local police in the event of an emergency.
- If your child gets lost – teach them how to report to a security person, store manager, the Gardaí or local police.
- Advise them on the tactics that are used by abductors to approach them e.g. to go looking for a lost pet, offering gifts etc. Tell them they should never to go with strangers, into houses or cars regardless of what explanation or inducement is being offered.
- Tell your children to inform you immediately if a stranger has approached them. Never dress your children with their name conspicuously on their clothing, as a stranger may use their name to get their attention. Tell them to run, scream and where to go if a person tries to touch or grab them.
- Parents or guardians should accompany children to toilets in public places.
- Survey the recreation places your child uses – point out the likely danger areas - alleyways, concealed places, recesses etc.
- Consider the use of smart watches with GPS for your child.
- Finally, never delay in reporting a missing child. Ensure you have an up-to-date photo with you.

Holiday Scams

Scammers and fraudsters operate the world over and you are no more immune from their activities when on holiday than when you are at home. Indeed in many locations, persons on holiday are frequently targeted by fraudsters and scammers.

Typical scams to be on the look-out for include -

- The bogus exclusive holiday club - which promises a lot but generally fails to deliver
- The phoney '2 for 1' voucher - often relating to restaurant meals which, when attempting to redeem, is found to be 'out of date' or 'no longer valid'
- The bogus taxi driver - "Beat the queue, sir, come with me", except you often end up taking the scenic route and paying far more than necessary
- Unofficial currency exchange scams - great rates offered but often found to contain counterfeit notes or blank paper in the middle of the bundle of notes handed back to you.

The old sayings "if it sounds too good to be true, it usually is" and "caveat emptor (buyer beware)" must always be considered.

The advice contained in this information sheet is not intended to be exhaustive or absolute.

Nothing contained in this publication should be interpreted as mandatory, obligatory or designed to conflict with any statutory regulations.



E.U. Anti Burglary Campaign supported by An Garda Síochána

Useful Contacts and Links

The Garda National Crime Prevention Unit
 Garda H.Q., Harcourt Square, Dublin 2.
 Tel: (01) 6663669, Email: GNCPU@garda.ie

An Garda Síochána
www.garda.ie

The Department of Foreign Affairs
www.foreignaffairs.gov.ie