# 10 safety tips for Black Friday shopping.

It’s been said that there are two kinds of people in the world. Those who love to brave the Black Friday crowds in search of the best deal… and those who won’t go within a mile of the mall the day after Thanksgiving.

But, if you’re among the former, some thoughtful planning and a few precautions can make your day more productive, safe, and most of all, fun.

Here are a few tips for *in-store* Black Friday shopping:

1. **Park near a light.** Thieves are much less likely to target a car when there’s a bright light on it… especially when it’s out in the open. We recommend a spot where you can see and be seen (not next to a large van or truck).
2. **Hide your treasures in the trunk.** If people don’t see shopping bags, they probably won’t see a reason to break in.
3. **Use the buddy system.** As with anything, there’s safety in numbers. If you do plan on separating, make a plan to meet up and consider color coordinating. That way, it will be easier to spot your friends or family members.
4. **Keep your purse on your body or your wallet in your front pocket.** Don’t make it easy for purse snatchers and pickpockets. Leaving a bag unattended is almost an invitation, and it’s significantly easier for someone to steal a wallet when it’s in their back pocket.
5. **Shop with a single credit card.** Keep only one credit card in your wallet, just in case it’s lost or stolen.
6. **Avoid ATMs.** If you can’t, at least choose one that is well lit. Shield your PIN as you key it in, and don’t leave behind receipts that may contain personal information.

7. **Take precautions in the parking lot.** Before you get in your car, look in it and under it. It pays to play it safe, and it could also be beneficial to have your keys handy. If you're rummaging through your purse or digging into a pocket, you're officially a distracted shopper – which would make it easy for the wrong people to approach you.

Or, if you prefer to shop *online*:

1. **Shop on secure sites.** Before you make any purchases, be sure the website has a closed padlock in the browser bar or a URL beginning with "https."
2. **Use one credit card for all online purchases.** Then, if a card is compromised, you have only have to make one cancellation call.
3. **Shop familiar brands and steer clear of "too good to be true" deals.** Scammers are out in full force during the holiday shopping period.

Already finished shopping? One last tip for you: As you wrap gifts to set out and enjoy, consider how visible they are from windows and doors. That gorgeous display of generosity might invite holiday visitors who are not so welcome.

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