

# Keep Yourself from Becoming a “Sliding” Victim

## Safety and Security Tips from S.E.A.L. Security Solutions

“Sliding” is on the rise. Learn how to prevent yourself from becoming a victim. It’s a crime of opportunity mostly affecting women because they carry purses.



Thieves look for easy targets in supermarket and big-box store parking lots as well as at gas stations.

### Stores

Thieves prowl store parking lots, often in vehicles with temporary (paper) license plates that are fake and thus untraceable. There will typically be both a driver and a passenger.

They look for shoppers who are about to load groceries or other purchases into the back of their vehicle, and then watch for where the victim has placed her purse. Whether it’s in the shopping cart or placed up front in the vehicle, both locations make it easy for the criminal to get out of their own vehicle, quietly and nonchalantly, then open the front door or grab the purse from the shopping cart – then they jump back in the waiting vehicle and take off, if they were seen, or close the door quietly and leave slowly so as not to attract attention if they weren’t.

Even at stores with good surveillance systems in the parking lot, these crimes are often never solved because those paper license plates are untraceable.

Keep your purse or other valuables on your person.

NEVER leave your purse or wallet sitting in the shopping cart – even if you’re right there, in between the cart and your trunk. It only takes a couple of seconds, while you’re carefully placing a bag of groceries in your trunk, for someone to grab your purse without you even knowing it.

If you still choose to leave your purse in the passenger compartment, place it under the seat where it can’t be readily seen.

And even if you place it under the seat, **LOCK YOUR DOORS** when you exit the vehicle. You may need to momentarily unlock the doors to then open the trunk or your fuel filler’s flap – but after you do that, **LOCK YOUR DOORS AGAIN. IMMEDIATELY.**

### Gas stations

At gas stations, the modus operandi is much the same: the thieves appear to pull up and get gas at the pump across from the victim. And when she’s not looking, they grab her purse from the front seat and take off.

Speaking of not looking, *stay off the phone* while pumping gas. Make it obvious that you are watching your vehicle and other people nearby.

### Prevention

Be aware of all those around you. **MAKE EYE CONTACT** so potential thieves know they have been seen.

### Preparation

Hope for the best, but prepare for the worst. If you do leave your purse in the front of the vehicle, don’t leave your phone in your purse. (Since phones are now so easily traceable, the thieves will most likely destroy and/or discard it right away. That’s one more hassle you don’t need.)

Keep spare keys to your home or vehicle with a trusted neighbor, relative, at work, etc.

Take photos or make a photocopy of all your credit/debit cards, driver’s license, etc. (front and back), that you normally keep in your purse or wallet, and keep those copies someplace safe, such as at home. That way, if they are lost or stolen, you will more easily be able to inform the companies and authorities.

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