



FSA – Keeping You Safe

How To Protect Yourself While Holiday Shopping

This holiday season is a time when people rush to the stores and the internet to shop for family members, loved ones and friends. For many, seeing the smile on a loved one's face makes overcrowded shopping and waiting in long lines worth it all. Unfortunately, there are also criminals who use this holiday season to target distracted shoppers. These criminals use this opportunity for pickpocketing, burglary and other crimes. To protect yourself from becoming a victim during the holiday shopping season stay alert and aware of what is going on around you at all times. In addition, shop during daylight hours whenever possible and if you must shop at night, go with a friend or family member. We also encourage you to follow these and more tips from the [Monroe County Sheriff's Office](#):

- Carry your purse close to your body or your wallet inside a coat or front trouser pocket.
- Park in a well-lighted area and be sure to lock your car doors.
- Have your keys in hand when approaching your vehicle. Check the back seat and around the car before getting in.
- Avoid carrying cash if at all possible. Use credit cards instead.
- Double check that you have your credit cards and wallet after you pay for your items.
- Save all receipts. Print and save all confirmations from your online purchases.
- If you are shopping with your children, talk to them ahead of time about what to do if they get lost in the crowd.
- When shopping online use secure websites for purchases. Look for the icon of a locked padlock at the bottom of the screen or “https” in the URL address.
- Beware of online “bargains” from companies with whom you are unfamiliar—if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is!

For more tips, please visit the Florida Sheriffs Associations Crime Prevention Tips: flsheriffs.org/crime-prevention