

For Your Security

*Tips for
Safe Riding*



CTA wants your ride to be a safe and pleasant one. By following the tips in this brochure, you can greatly reduce the already slim chances of becoming a victim--and help discourage those who try to make a living by committing crimes. Public transportation is much safer than some perceive.... and you can help keep it safe.

IN GENERAL

The first rule: Stay alert! Relax and enjoy your ride, but do not fall asleep or become so distracted that your handbag or packages become unguarded. Know your route ahead of time, and have your fare ready while boarding, so your attention is not distracted. People-watching is one of the benefits of riding transit--but there are some types of behavior that should be watched with suspicion. Assume a purposeful manner...if you look apprehensive, some people might be more inclined to take advantage of this.

HELP IS NEARBY... ON OUR VEHICLES

Every CTA bus is equipped with a two-way radio. Tell the bus operator if an incident is occurring. Buses are also equipped with alarms for emergencies. On trains, all motormen and conductors have two-way personal radios. Conductors are usually located towards the middle of the train. During late night hours, you'll be even more secure by riding in the car with the conductor. Supervisors who ride the lines in the course of their duties also have radios.

HELP IS NEARBY... AT OUR STATIONS

Every rapid transit station has a public phone on the platform and on most mezzanines. There is no charge to call for emergency services (dial 911). Every station agent booth has a direct line to the CTA's Control Center for the agent's use. And some stations have supervisor's booths on the platform that are manned during day and early evening hours.

Elevated, ground level, and expressway median stations have agents on duty at most days and times, depending upon the ridership level. Subway stations have agents at all times that the station is open. Late at night, you may wish to wait near the agent's booth until you hear a train coming, then go to the platform to board.

THE MOST COMMON CRIMES

The most common crimes that occur in public places are pickpocketing, handbag snatching, jewelry theft and gambling. Here are ways to protect yourself, and to prevent these crimes from happening in the first place.

Pickpocketing

A skillful pickpocket, often working with an accomplice, can remove a wallet in a couple of seconds and be gone before you notice the loss.

Men: Do NOT carry your wallet in your back pocket--it's so easy to take out!

Always keep your wallet in a front coat or pants pocket, buttoned or zipped if possible.

Women: Make sure your purse is closed--pickpockets will try for the valuables inside the purse as well as the purse itself. Always know where your purse is--and hold on to it.

Everybody: Beware of someone jostling you...or blocking your path..or loud arguments. These may all be ploys to distract your attention while another member of a pickpocket team collects your wallet or purse or package.

Handbag Snatch

When waiting for a bus or train, keep your handbag in front of you, and hold it close to you with both hands. If a snatch is attempted, DO NOT cling to the purse, even though this seems like the natural way to protect its contents. The pushing and

shoving involved in trying to take the purse against your resistance could result in injury. For this reason, do not wrap the strap around your neck.

Do not carry anything more valuable than you can afford to lose. Keep your wallet and credit cards in separate places. Leave unnecessary credit cards at home. When you shop, leave your purse in one of the bags instead of out in the open, The best solution may be to not carry a purse at all...put your valuables somewhere else on your person.

Jewelry Theft

Do not display flashy jewelry, chains or rings. It only takes a moment to have these torn from you...with a high risk of injury. Keep all jewelry out of sight, in an interior pocket.

Gambling

This is for Las Vegas...not a CTA bus or train. The favorite con games are three card monte or the shell game. The odds are 100 to 0, and they're not in your favor! Gamblers will entice you by shouting "Five will get you ten" or "ten will get you twenty". Often, they'll have a friend acting as a stranger who will 'win', to encourage others to play. Sometimes the wad of money carried is counterfeit or mostly blank paper. Remember...there is no such thing as a free lunch...gamblers don't ride our trains to give away money!

IF ATTACKED

Your #1 defense: *SCREAM, SCREAM, SCREAM*. Then, if necessary, defend yourself. Each incident is different, and there is no "one response" that can always be recommended . . . your main objective should be to avoid injury. When you break away, run toward light and people, and continue to scream.

REPORT CRIME IMMEDIATELY

If a crime goes unreported, two bad things happen: (1) The assailant cannot be caught, and (2) It allows criminals to operate without interference. Some people say, "What's the use....they'll never catch him." If everyone thought that way, no one would be caught! This type of thinking actually produces more crime by the same criminals. Whether you are a victim or a witness, call the police. Get involved....for everyone's benefit.

OBTAIN A DETAILED DESCRIPTION

If you are the victim of a crime, it is important to give as complete a description as possible, **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE**. Make notes about the offender's height, weight, sex, age, race, distinguishing marks, in which hand a weapon was held, and a description of clothing. **WRITE THIS INFORMATION DOWN. YOU MAY NOT REMEMBER IT WHEN YOU NEED IT.** Get witnesses if possible.

YOU PAY FOR FARE EVASION

Fare cheating is a crime...not only for the act itself, but in how it hurts other riders and our service in general. Money lost from fares not paid can only be made up by either fare increases and/or service cuts, or by not making improvements in service or facilities. CTA doesn't make money; about 50% of our revenue comes from the farebox, and the rest from various taxes and public grants. So the only people that are being cheated are riders like yourself.

Some people take the risk to save \$1.00...or even less. It's not worth the embarrassment of arrest, fingerprinting, and a fine or jail term, not to mention time lost from school or work. And a criminal record could possibly damage your future employment prospects.

So please, pay the correct fare and encourage others to do so. Don't give your transfer away...why should someone else ride free when you had to pay? Don't loan your student riding permit or monthly pass to someone else. And don't buy monthly passes from someone on the street. If you are caught using a counterfeit pass, it's not only embarrassing...but illegal.

YOU PAY FOR GRAFFITI

In 1987, CTA spent \$3.7 million on removing graffiti. That money could have gone to so many better uses such as more frequent service...or even higher standards of maintenance and cleaning. Why should you have to ride in uncomfortable surroundings that encourage disrespect for property

and people? It's not art...it's vandalism. Report acts of graffiti in progress by calling 911. We've repainted some stations over 100 times. It's time to stop this...for everyone's sake.

SAFETY AND CIVILITY IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY

Safety from crime involves responsible behavior by ALL riders. Do not invite crime by your actions, and report crime when it does occur. Remember, crimes are committed by a very small percentage of CTA riders. Don't let them ruin it for the rest of us!

Civility means appropriate behavior in a public place, such as at our stations or on our vehicles. We all know it's against the law to smoke, litter, or play radios on CTA. But there's more to civility than that...such as avoiding loud behavior, horseplay, fighting, sprawling over seats, and in general bothering other riders. CTA gives you the freedom to think, read, talk, listen, and watch the passing scene. Let everyone enjoy this!

ENJOY YOUR CITY... ENJOY YOUR CTA

You are fortunate to live in or visit one of the world's finest cities...Chicago. And CTA is one of the best transit systems in North America. By working together, we can help keep both our city and transit system "hassle-free" for everyone.

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