

# An Garda Síochána Crime Prevention Information Sheet



## Seasonal Safety Advice

For most people the Christmas Period is an enjoyable and festive season. Unfortunately for some, the month of December sees Assaults rise by almost a third more than in January or February.

The peak time for assaults are weekend nights and research shows you are more likely to be assaulted if you have consumed alcohol. There is a clear correlation between assaults and incidents of drunkenness.

Most reported Assaults tend to happen around pubs, clubs or town centres.

### STAYING SAFE ON CHRISTMAS NIGHTS OUT

- Tell someone where you are going and when you expect to be home.
- Carry your mobile phone (Charged!)
- Drinking - if one of the group has too much to drink - ensure they get home safely!
- If out with a group - watch out for one another. Remember there is safety in numbers
- Plan your trip home or arrange a lift, if you have to walk home use well lit routes .
- Remember never drink and drive
- If you're the designated driver, park your car in a well lit area and don't leave property visible.
- If you see someone in trouble call 999, 112 or the local Garda Station.

### FESTIVE CELEBRATIONS

- Everyone is responsible for safety whether you are having a house party, office party or other celebration.
- Be a great host and serve alcohol responsibly.
- Don't serve alcohol to drunk people.
- Don't serve alcohol to under 18's.
- Have low and non-alcoholic drinks available.
- Provide food that is tasty and filling.
- Promote safe transport options for your guests, including calling taxis.



### SHOPPING AT CHRISTMAS

When you're out spending money, be aware that thieves are out too, looking for opportunities to commit crime.

To stay safe while you're out Shopping;

- Take extra care when using a cash point or chip and pin.
- Don't let anyone see your pin number, never write down your pin number
- If you carry a handbag, keep your purse at the bottom
- Never keep your wallet in your back pocket
- Keep your handbag zipped at all times – crowded shopping areas are very popular with pickpockets
- Don't leave your handbag in the shopping trolley while you shop
- Stay alert when using your mobile phone. It's very easy for someone to snatch it out of your hand
- Don't return to your car to leave purchases in the boot before continuing with your shopping, as thieves may watch car parks
- Don't leave valuables on the seat of your car - they attract thieves
- Keep the car door locked, even when travelling
- Don't leave your house keys in your car.
- In December most of these incidents occur between 2pm and 9pm – Christmas shopping time!

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](http://www.garda.ie)

## SAFE HOMES OVER CHRISTMAS

### FACTS ON HOME BURGLARIES

1. In winter, burglaries increase by 23%.
2. 46% of burglaries in winter occur between 5pm and 11pm.
3. In 19% of burglaries, entry is through an unsecured door or window.
4. Jewellery and cash are the most common articles stolen during burglaries.
5. There were over 160 cases where car keys were "fished" through the letterbox in the past year.



### PREVENT BURGLARIES

1. Secure all Doors and Windows
2. Light up your Home, use timer switches when out
3. Store Keys safely and away from windows & letterboxes
4. Record details of Valuables and don't keep large Cash amounts at home
5. Use your Alarm, even when at home

### Over Christmas

- Put presents under the Christmas tree early on Christmas morning
- If you are expecting a parcel, make sure someone is there when it is delivered, or ask a neighbour to take it in. Avoid having it left on the door step
- Once you've opened all your gifts, don't leave the boxes on view outside to advertise your good for tune to criminals.

## GOING AWAY FOR THE FESTIVE HOLIDAYS

- Make your home look occupied
- Cancel any newspaper or milk deliveries
- Trusted neighbours may be able to help you by collecting your post, opening and closing curtains and they could park their car on your driveway
- Avoid discussing holiday plans where strangers may hear details of your absence from home
- Don't let people know your home will be vacant by discussing your holiday on Social Media—do it when you're back!
- Leave important documents and valuable items with other family members or a bank. Alternatively lock them in a safe
- Do not put your home address on your luggage when you are travelling to your holiday destination. A work address will suffice if you want to label your luggage
- If you normally leave valuable bicycles or similar items in your shed, consider putting them in the house
- Make sure that you lock all outside doors and windows and turn on your alarm.



### Alcohol

- Alcohol takes time to process through your body
- (1 unit of alcohol = ½ pint beer = approx. 1 hour). This is especially important the 'morning after'.
- New lower drink drive limits were introduced in Ireland on the 28th October 2011. The drink drive (BAC Blood Alcohol Concentration) limit was reduced from 0.8 (80 mgs/100mls) to 0.5 (50mg/100mls). A further lower limit of 0.2 (20 mgs/ 100mls) was introduced for "specified" drivers.
- Alcohol (and/ or drugs) will impair your ability to drive and effect your judgement, reactions, vision and ability to make decisions.



**"NEVER EVER DRINK AND DRIVE"**

*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.*

Useful Numbers :  
 Garda Confidential Number : 1800 666 111  
 Crime Victims Helpline: 116 006  
 Dublin Rape Crisis Centre: 1800 77 88 88  
 Women's Aid: 1800 341 900  
 Amen: 046 9023 718  
 Child line: 116 000  
 Samaritans: 116 123



**Winter Burglary Graphic**

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