

Prevention

- Keep your front doors and windows clear of signs and posters to allow good two way visibility. Make sure employees can see suspicious persons outside and passers-by and police can see inside.
- Keep your business well lit, inside and outside. Employees should report any burned-out lights to the business owner or manager. Keep trees and bushes trimmed, so they do not block any outdoor lights.
- Make sure your cash register area is clearly visible to outside observers.
- Place markers at the main entrance that employees can use to help gauge the height of a robber as he leaves.
- Try to greet customers as they enter your business. Look them in the eye, and ask them if they need help. Your attention can discourage a robber.
- Be alert for “customers” who seem to be loitering or glancing around the store while appearing to shop or browse through a magazine.
- Watch for suspicious persons outside the business - especially in parked cars and around telephone booths. Write down license numbers of suspicious vehicles if visible from the inside of your business.
- If you see someone who is acting suspicious inside or outside, call the police.
- Practice good cash control. Keep a minimum amount in your cash drawer and make regular drops into a safe.
- Do not keep large bills under the cash drawer. If you do not have a safe, find a less obvious place to hide your extra cash until you go to the bank.
- Advertise outside that you keep a minimal amount of cash in the register and that you will not accept large bills.
- Consider leaving a package of “bait” currency in the cash register, bills you have recorded the serial numbers on, to give to the robber.
- Use a safe that the clerk cannot open alone or that requires two keys. Post that fact conspicuously both inside and outside the store, including on the safe itself.
- Vary your banking routine. Carry cash in a variety of ways - a lunch sack, attaché case, flight bag, pocket, etc. Money bags are too obvious.
- Vary the times and routes that you use to go to the bank.
- Make deposits as often as possible, never less than once a day. Avoid nighttime deposits.
- Use video camera surveillance and make it well known.
- Be sure that your video monitoring equipment is operating.

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- Place a surveillance camera behind the cash register facing the front counter to record peoples faces.
- If your recording system uses video and is not digital, replace the tapes regularly as they degrade over time.
- If your recording system is digital ensure the police can quickly receive a copy of the event.
- Always have at least two clerks working at night.
- Use only one register at night. Leave other registers empty and open. Tilt the register drawer to show there is no money in it.
- Leave blinds and drapes partially open during closing hours. This will allow passers-by and police to see inside after hours and you to see inside before you enter.
- Have two persons should be on hand at opening and closing times.
- At opening time, have one person enter the store and check to see if it has been disturbed.
- Before closing, have one person check the office, back rooms and rest rooms to make sure no one is hiding inside.
- Keep side and back doors locked. Have employees use the main entrance, if possible.
- Use care after dark. Be cautious when cleaning the parking lot or taking out the trash at night. Make sure another employee inside the business keeps you within eye contact while you are involved in work details outside of your building.
- If you see something suspicious, call the police. Never try to handle it yourself. It could cost you your life.

During

- Be careful, most robbers are just as nervous as you are.
- Cooperate with the robber for your own safety and the safety of others. Comply with a robber's demands. Remain calm and think clearly.
- Put your safety first. Your personal safety is more important than money or merchandise.
- If you have a silent alarm and can reach it without being noticed, use it. Otherwise, wait until the robber leaves.
- Do exactly as you are told. DO NOT RESIST! Remain calm, robbers are usually very excited and may be easily provoked or they may be under the influence of drugs.
- Tell the robber about anything that might surprise him, such as someone who is expected to arrive soon.
- If you must move or reach for something, tell the robber what you are doing and why.
- Prevent surprises; keep your hands in sight at all times. Do not make any sudden moves.
- Do not talk except to answer the robber's questions.
- Do not stare directly at the robber.

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- Make mental notes of the robber's physical description and other observations important to law enforcement officers.
- Try to notice abnormalities, speech problems or scars.
- Notice type of build, or estimate weight.
- Notice type and colour of clothing worn.
- Note and be able to describe the size, type and colour of any weapons used in the robbery.
- Keep the hold up note if one is used by the robber.
- Give the robber time to leave.
- Note his direction of travel when he leaves.
- Try to get a description of his vehicle ONLY if you can do so without exposing yourself to harm.
- Do not be a hero. Do not chase or follow the robber out of your place of business. It is better to lose your money than lose your life.

After

- Call the police immediately, even if you have already activated the alarm.
- Close the store and lock the door(s) if you have a key.
- Do not discuss the details of the robbery with witnesses or fellow employees.
- Ask any witnesses to stay until police arrive. If they cannot, get their names, phone numbers and addresses.
- Do not touch anything that the robber may have touched. Block off areas where the robber was, if necessary.
- Try to recall as much as you can about the robber's appearance, speech and mannerisms. Make notes.
- Do not trust your memory - write down all of the information immediately
- Do not discuss the amount of money taken with anyone other than police.
- If available, have an employee stand outside the store when the police arrive so that they will know the robber is gone and you are safe.
- Let the police answer inquiries from the news media.
- If you or any of your staff have any trouble returning to your normal routine after the robbery, contact Victim Services Unit or other professional help.
- Leave the job of catching the robber to the police.

Your best weapon is your brain. Use common sense, imagination, and good judgment.