



# COMMUNITY LIAISON UNIT

COLUMBUS DIVISION OF POLICE • STRATEGIC RESPONSE BUREAU

## Automatic Teller Machine (ATM) Safety Tips

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ATM Machines have become the target of criminal opportunities such as robberies, purse thefts, and other personal crimes. The following is a list of suggestions to help reduce your vulnerabilities and the criminal's opportunities.

- Always be aware, alert, and prepared to act when visiting an ATM machine. Walk with a purpose displaying confidence; criminals prey on those who appear to be timid.
- If possible, especially at night, do not use an outside walk-up machine. Select an ATM at a location void of barriers blocking the line of sight to the ATM. This includes shrubbery, landscaping, and signs that can provide excellent concealment for would be criminals.
- If you use an outside machine, use one that is well-lighted and visible.
- Try not to visit a machine alone; there is safety in numbers.
- Do not just walk up to a machine; look around for suspicious cars or persons. If something does not look right, go to another location.
- Do not flash cash and if possible do not dress expensively or display expensive jewelry.
- Enter your PIN numbers quickly and block the display with your body so no one can read them; be observant of shoulder surfers.
- Do not leave receipts at the machine, take them with you.
- Trust your instincts (Sixth Sense). If you feel something is wrong, go to another location.
- In most cases a drive up machine is safest. However, leave enough room between you and any other vehicle in front of you. If there is any sign of trouble, drive off.
- Know your neighborhood. Look for an inside or drive-up machine in a safe, well lit, visible area.
- Memorize your PIN number; do not write it on the card. Make it a number that cannot be found in your purse or wallet. For example, date of birth, house number, etc.
- If confronted by an attacker, remember your life is more important than your cash.

*For further information call the Columbus, Ohio Division of Police  
Strategic Response Bureau 645-4610*