

Here are some things to watch for involving vehicles:

- ! Any vehicle moving slowly and without lights, or following a course that appears aimless or repetitive is suspicious in any location, but particularly so in areas of schools, parks and playgrounds. Occupants may be “casing” for places to rob or burglarize, or could possibly be a drug pusher or sex offender.
- ! Parked occupied vehicles containing one or more persons are especially significant if observed at an unusual hour. They could be possible lookouts for a burglary in progress.
- ! Vehicles being loaded with valuables are suspicious if parked in front of a closed business or untended residence—even if the vehicle is a legitimate looking commercial unit. More and more professional thieves are taking the time and trouble to “customize” their vehicles with special signs in order to move more freely without suspicion.
- ! Apparent business transactions conducted from a vehicle, especially around schools or parks and if juveniles are involved, could mean possible drug sales.
- ! Persons being forced into vehicles—especially if juveniles or females—may mean a possible kidnapping.
- ! The abandoned vehicle parked on your block may be a stolen car.

Other Unusual Situations You Should Report:

Continuous “repair” operations at a non-business location could mean stolen property being stripped, repainted and otherwise altered.

- ! Open or broken doors or windows at a closed business or residence whose owners are absent could mean a burglary in progress or already completed.
- ! Unusual noises such as gunshots, screaming, sounds of combat, a dog or dogs barking excessively —anything suggestive of foul play, danger or illegal activity should be reported.
- ! Unusually strong chemical odor in a residential area or near a storage building may indicate an illegal drug operation.
- ! Someone parking a vehicle on one street and walking to another street could indicate a burglar or thief attempting to hide their escape vehicle.

While some, if not all, of the suspicious situations described could have innocent explanations, the Arlington Police Department would rather investigate crime-prone situation than be called when it is too late. Your call could save a life, prevent an injury or stop a criminal act.

Remember...

Call the Arlington Police Department for a free home security check and implement the suggestions.

- ! Mark your property with your driver’s license number.
- ! Organize and participate in the Community Crime Watch Program.
- ! Call 9-1-1 immediately if you observe possible criminal activity.



Crime Prevention Begins With You!

Arlington Police Department **817 459-5725** Rev. 3/00



or

When to Call The Police

A project of the
Arlington Police Department

Help the Police to Help You

No police department can function effectively without the concerned assistance of responsible citizens. Police are depending upon you to call and report whenever you observe suspicious persons or actions.

Some people fail to call police simply because they are not aware of what seemingly innocent activities might be suspicious. Others may notice suspicious activity and be hesitant to call for fear of seeming to be a “nosy neighbor” or a “crank.” Still others take it for granted that someone else has already called.

Call the police immediately about all suspicious activity—and do it yourself. Don’t worry about “bothering” them because this is the police department’s purpose. Don’t worry about being embarrassed if your suspicions prove unfounded. Think instead about what could happen if you don’t act.

Information Most Often Needed By Police

- ! **What** happened?
- ! **When?**
- ! **Where?**
- ! Is anyone injured?
- ! Vehicle license number
- ! Vehicle description
- ! Direction of flight
- ! Description of persons (including clothing)
- ! When describing suspects, notice age, race, sex, height and weight. Compare your weight and height with suspect’s. Pick out some unique characteristics which will help you identify the suspect in the future if need be.



But What Is Suspicious?

Basically, anything that seems even slightly “out of place” for the area or during the time of day in which it occurs could mean criminal activity.

Some of the most obvious things to watch for and report include:

- ! A stranger entering your neighbor’s house when it is unoccupied may be a burglar.
- ! A scream heard anywhere may mean robbery or sexual assault.
- ! Offers of merchandise at ridiculously low prices could mean stolen property.
- ! Anyone removing accessories, license plates or gasoline from a car should be reported.
- ! Anyone peering into parked cars may be looking for valuables left displayed in the car.
- ! Persons entering or leaving a business place after hours could be burglars.
- ! The sound of breaking glass or other explosive noises could mean an accident, housebreaking or vandalizing.
- ! Persons loitering around schools, parks, secluded areas or in the neighborhood could be sex offenders.
- ! Persons around the neighborhood who do not live there could be burglars.

Some Not-So-Obvious Things to Watch for:

Not every stranger who comes into your neighborhood is a criminal by any means. There are perfectly legitimate door-to-door sales, repair, and service people moving around our neighborhoods all the time. But criminals do take advantage of this by assuming the guise of the legitimate business representatives. After all, if a criminal looked like a criminal, no one would have any trouble spotting him/her.

Here are some situations involving people you might see and descriptions of what their actions may mean:

- ! **Someone is going door-to-door** in your neighborhood. Watch for a while. If after a few houses are visited, one or more of the persons tries a door to see if it is locked or goes into a back or side yard, it could be a burglar. Such action is even more suspicious if one person remains in front when this occurs or if there is a car following a few houses away.
- ! **Someone waiting in front of a house** or business becomes suspicious if the owners are absent, or –if it is a business– the business is closed. This might be a lookout for a burglary in progress inside.
- ! **Anyone forcing entrance** to or tampering with a residence, business or vehicle is suspicious anytime, anywhere.
- ! **A person running**, especially if carrying something of value, could be leaving the scene of a crime.
- ! **Carrying property** could be suspicious too, if it’s at an unusual hour or in an unusual place, and if the property is not wrapped as if just purchased.
- ! A person exhibiting unusual mental or physical symptoms may be injured, under the influence of drugs or otherwise needing medical or psychiatric assistance.
- ! Much human traffic to and from a certain residence is not suspicious unless it occurs on a daily or very regular basis, especially during late or unusual hours. It could possibly be the scene of vice activities or a “fence” operation.

