

Putting REALTOR® Safety First:
Safety Strategies for the
Modern REALTOR®

DECISIONS AHEAD

REALTOR® SAFETY PROGRAM

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®

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NAR's Safety Program

- Reduce the number of safety incidents that occur in the industry
- Every REALTOR® comes home safely to their family every night
- www.nar.realtor/safety

REALTOR® SAFETY PROGRAM

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EMPOWER YOUR FUTURE.

Make an investment in yourself, your career, and your industry.

Commitment to Excellence is a program that empowers you to enhance and showcase your high level of professionalism, providing you an advantage in our highly competitive market.

It's a program that enables a self-directed experience and offers engaging ways to continue to learn and grow. It's not a designation or a course, and it's not a requirement. Thousands of REALTORS® have enjoyed their career journey and are leveraging their learnings. If you haven't signed on, get started today. Don't miss this opportunity to gain market advantage for yourself and stand out among your competition!

Learn more and get started at C2EX.realtor.

Proud to be C2EX endorsed!

C2EX COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE

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Module 1:
Your Personal Safety

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Safety Spheres

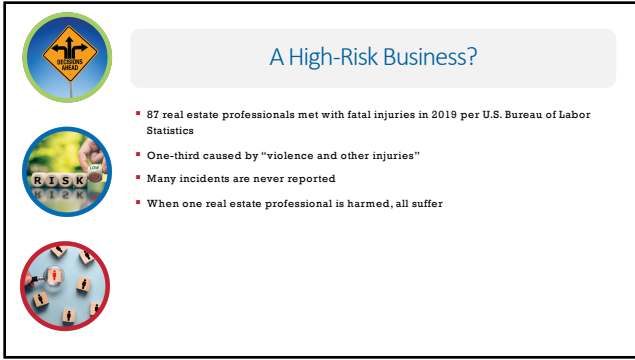
- Your personal safety
- Your office and colleagues
- Buyers
- Sellers
- Online
- Your home and family
- **What happens in one safety sphere can impact others**

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Five Key Actions

- Strategy
- Best practices
- Learn from webinars and videos
- Learn and use personal protection resources
- Improve safety culture

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A High-Risk Business?

- 87 real estate professionals met with fatal injuries in 2019 per U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
- One-third caused by "violence and other injuries"
- Many incidents are never reported
- When one real estate professional is harmed, all suffer

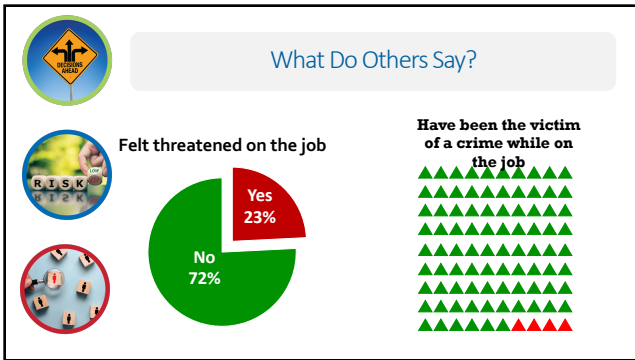
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Why Is Real Estate Risky?

- Image of success
- Meeting unknown prospects at properties
- Working at unfamiliar properties at odd hours
- Sitting open houses alone
- Entering vacant properties
- Driving with strangers while multitasking
- Public visibility
- Many ways for prospects to make contact
- Handling client's personal information
- Who would harm me?

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What Do Others Say?

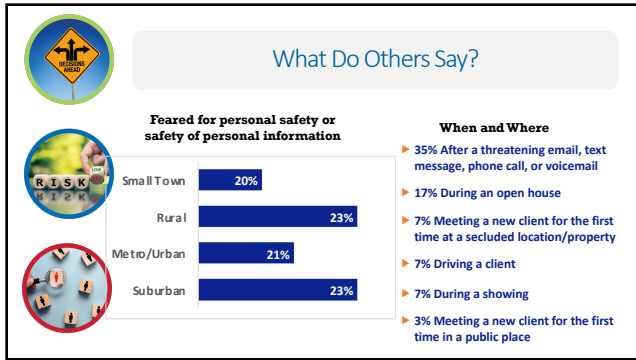
Felt threatened on the job

Yes	23%
No	72%

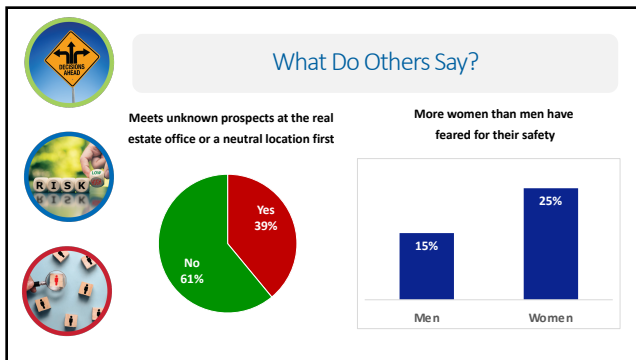
Have been the victim of a crime while on the job

Yes	23%
No	72%

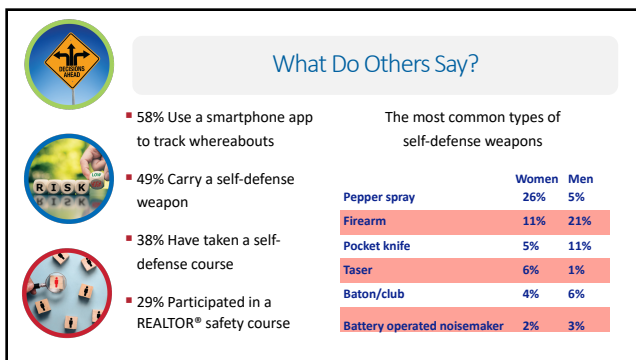
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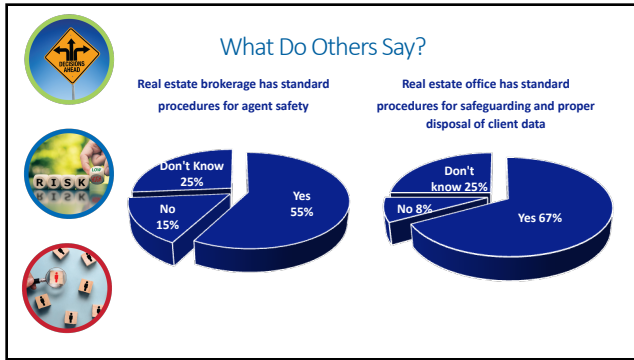
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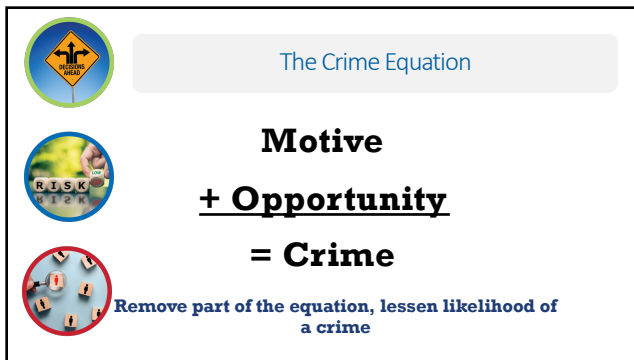
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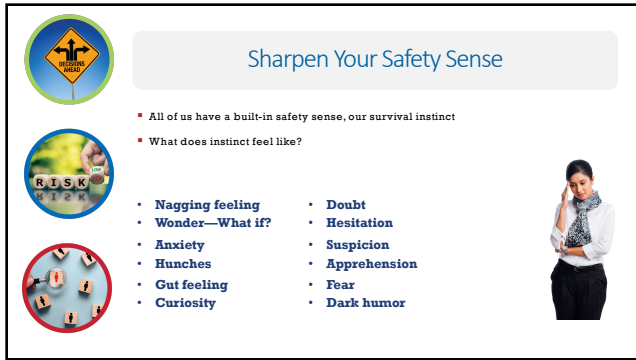


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Understanding the Criminal Mind and Motivation

	Predator	Thief
Motive	Power, control	Profit
Crime	Assault, rape, murder	Burglary, robbery
Emotional	Yes	No
Goal	Isolate the victim	Be isolated
Decision-making	Fulfill emotional needs	Potential profit versus risk

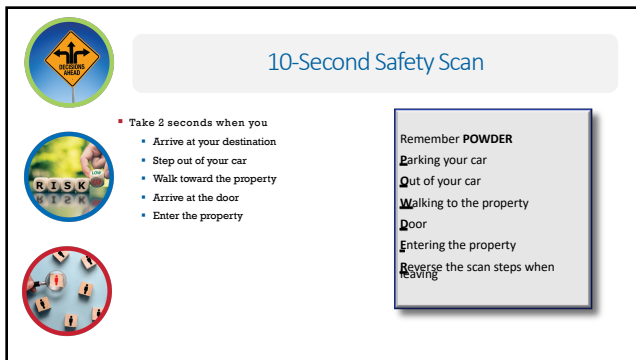
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Sharpen Your Safety Sense

- All of us have a built-in safety sense, our survival instinct
- What does instinct feel like?
 - Nagging feeling
 - Wonder—What if?
 - Anxiety
 - Hunches
 - Cut feeling
 - Curiosity
 - Doubt
 - Hesitation
 - Suspicion
 - Apprehension
 - Fear
 - Dark humor

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10-Second Safety Scan

- Take 2 seconds when you
 - Arrive at your destination
 - Step out of your car
 - Walk toward the property
 - Arrive at the door
 - Enter the property

Remember **POWDER**

Parking your car

Out of your car

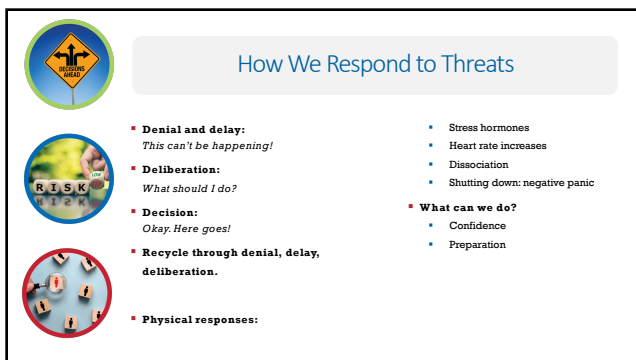
Walking to the property

Door

Entering the property

Reverse the scan steps when **LEAVING**

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How We Respond to Threats

- Denial and delay:** *This can't be happening!*
- Deliberation:** *What should I do?*
- Decision:** *Okay. Here goes!*
- Recycle through denial, delay, deliberation.**
- Physical responses:**
 - Stress hormones
 - Heart rate increases
 - Dissociation
 - Shutting down: negative panic
- What can we do?**
 - Confidence
 - Preparation

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The Strongest Defense



“The strongest defense is a plan of what you will do to avoid high-risk situations and what you will do if you find yourself in danger.”



Amanda Ripley, *The Unthinkable, Who Survives When Disaster Strikes—and Why*.

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Fight or Flight?



Depends on a combination of factors:

- Physical capability
- Proximity of the attacker
- Presence of a weapon
- Knowledge of self-defense



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Escape the Situation



- If threatened—act decisively and escape unharmed
- Don't apologize or announce intention
- Running away is as courageous as fighting back
- Can you make an escape?





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Can You Escape?

- Fitness level and stamina
- Clothing
- Terrain and obstacles
- Safe location to run to

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Should You Try to Defend Yourself?

Fighting back:
A conscious decision when escaping is not an option







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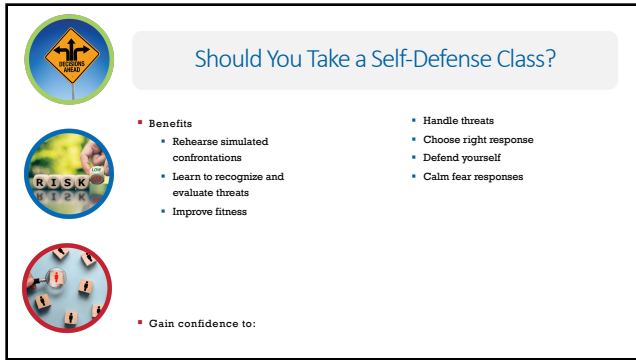


Can You Diffuse the Situation?

- Buy time to assess the situation, decide what to do
- Create a distraction and escape
- On the other hand,
 - May trigger the attacker's emotions
 - May justify an attack (in the predator's mind)

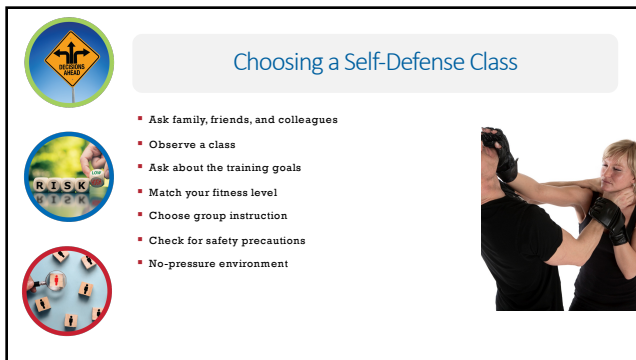
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Should You Take a Self-Defense Class?


- Benefits
 - Rehearse simulated confrontations
 - Learn to recognize and evaluate threats
 - Improve fitness
- Gain confidence to:
 - Handle threats
 - Choose right response
 - Defend yourself
 - Calm fear responses

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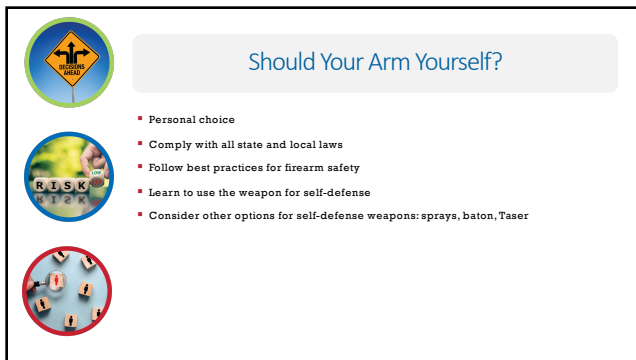


Choosing a Self-Defense Class

- Ask family, friends, and colleagues
- Observe a class
- Ask about the training goals
- Match your fitness level
- Choose group instruction
- Check for safety precautions
- No-pressure environment




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Should Your Arm Yourself?




- Personal choice
- Comply with all state and local laws
- Follow best practices for firearm safety
- Learn to use the weapon for self-defense
- Consider other options for self-defense weapons: sprays, baton, Taser

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Learn to Use Weapons for Self-Defense

- A weapon is a liability if an attacker can take it away and use it against you
- Learn how to use it properly for self-defense
- Know and comply with your state's weapons laws








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Your Smartphone—Your Personal Safety Tool

- GPS tracking
- Texting
- Alerts and alarms
- Photo sharing
- Surveillance
- Call blockers







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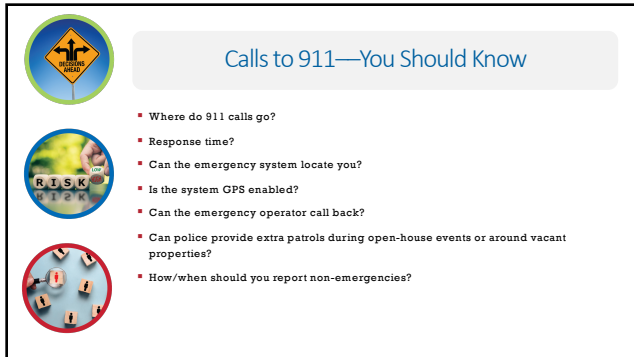


Do You Know the Caller?

- You can be tricked into a conversation with someone you don't know
- Scammers feed off your reactions
- Listen to your instincts
- If you don't remember the caller, you've probably never met

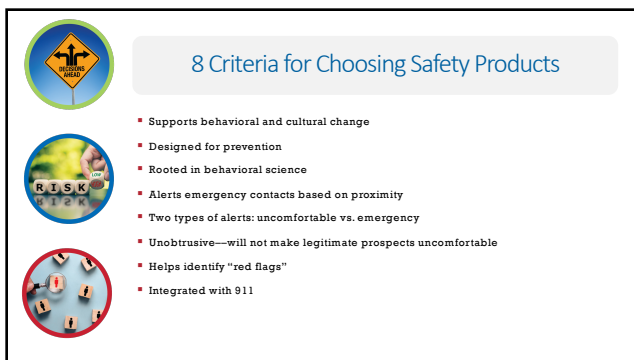
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Call to 911—You Should Know

- Where do 911 calls go?
- Response time?
- Can the emergency system locate you?
- Is the system GPS enabled?
- Can the emergency operator call back?
- Can police provide extra patrols during open-house events or around vacant properties?
- How/when should you report non-emergencies?

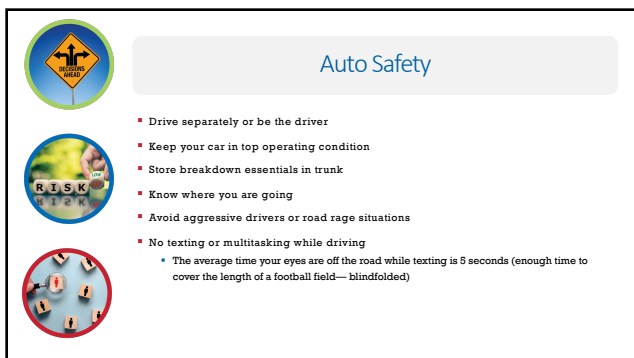
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8 Criteria for Choosing Safety Products

- Supports behavioral and cultural change
- Designed for prevention
- Rooted in behavioral science
- Alerts emergency contacts based on proximity
- Two types of alerts: uncomfortable vs. emergency
- Unobtrusive—will not make legitimate prospects uncomfortable
- Helps identify "red flags"
- Integrated with 911


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Auto Safety



- Drive separately or be the driver
- Keep your car in top operating condition
- Store breakdown essentials in trunk
- Know where you are going
- Avoid aggressive drivers or road rage situations
- No texting or multitasking while driving
 - The average time your eyes are off the road while texting is 8 seconds (enough time to cover the length of a football field— blindfolded)

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Parking Lot Safety

- Keep keys out and ready to open the car door
- Unlock only the driver-side door
- Check the back seat
- Lock all doors immediately upon entering and get moving
- Keep car keys on a separate key ring from house and office keys






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More Safety Tips

- Know who is calling
- Keep your cell phone ready to use
- Personal location devices—GPS wearables
- Know where you are going
- Roadside service
- Cold weather essentials
- Stalking is a predatory crime

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Module 2: Safety With Buyers







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First Meetings

- CITO—Come Into The Office
- Standard office policy
 - Prospect Identification Form
 - Photocopy the ID and attach it to the form
 - Snap a photo of the prospect's ID and send it to the office
- Be wary of email contacts who refuse to provide a full name

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Equal Professional Services


- Procedures or forms used to collect information from prospects must be applied consistently
- Inconsistent application could be viewed as discriminatory

REALTORS® shall not deny equal professional services to any person for reasons of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, national origin, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

National Association of REALTORS®, Code of Ethics, Article 10






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Background Checks? Yes or No?

- No national database with complete and accurate criminal records
- Inconsistent classification and delayed reporting
- Percentage of crimes reported
 - 46% robberies
 - 37% simple assaults
 - 62% aggravated assaults
 - 33% rape and sexual assaults






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Who Knows Your Location?

- Office should know your property showing itinerary
- Take a showing buddy
- Calls and alerts
 - Call or text the office to confirm your arrival
 - Ask for a call back
 - Set an alarm
- Ask the prospect to step outside while you secure the property
- Notify office when showing is finished and state where you are going next







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Distress Codes

- Secret word or phrase to signal danger (e.g., "Could you email me the easement file?")
- What code words do you use?







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Arriving at the Property—Prepare the Home

- Turn on all the lights
- Open drapes and blinds
- Unlock exterior doors
- Open interior doors
- Open garage door
- Clear obstructions
- Put away dangerous objects
- Position surveillance cameras






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Set the Tone

- How and where you greet the arriving prospect
- Set an authoritative and in-control tone
- Maintain a social distance of about 5-7 feet from a prospect






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Risky Locations

- Bedrooms and bathrooms
- Closets and pantries
- Out buildings
- Garages
- Basements
- Stairs
 - Prospect goes up or down the stairs first
 - Maintain a four-stair difference
 - Prospect moves away from the top or bottom of the stairs before you complete the ascent or descent
 - Keep a grip on the handrail






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Showing Vacant Properties

- Learn the house before you show it
- Squatter inside? Leave immediately and call the police.
- Angry former homeowner? Apologize for the disturbance and leave.
 - Call lender, asset management company, or listing agent
- Meet the neighbors
- No after-dark showings






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Commercial Properties

- Schedule showings of vacant commercial sites during daylight hours
- Thick walls and remote locations may interfere with cell phone reception






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Showing a Property After Dark

- Ineffective way to show a property
- Turn on all lights as you go through
- Open all shades, curtains, or blinds
- Advise your supervisor of the appointment time
- Take a showing buddy






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Red Flags

- Is an attack imminent?
- Predator "testing the waters"
- Attempt to isolate the victim
- Escalation from professional to personal
- Invasion of body space
- Uninvited touching
- Personal questions


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Body Language

- Looking out the window
- ▶ Lack of eye contact
- ▶ Hands in the pockets
- ▶ Cool weather clothing in warm weather
- ▶ Dilated pupils
- ▶ Changes in breathing or facial expression
- ▶ Visible veins
- ▶ Wiping hands
- ▶ Fidgeting

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Verbal Signals

- More interest in you than in the house
- ▶ Issuing orders
- ▶ Asking you to move closer
- ▶ Sharing excessive personal information
- ▶ Suggestive language that is too familiar or intimate
- ▶ Inappropriate compliments
- ▶ Speaking louder, faster, or in a sharper tone

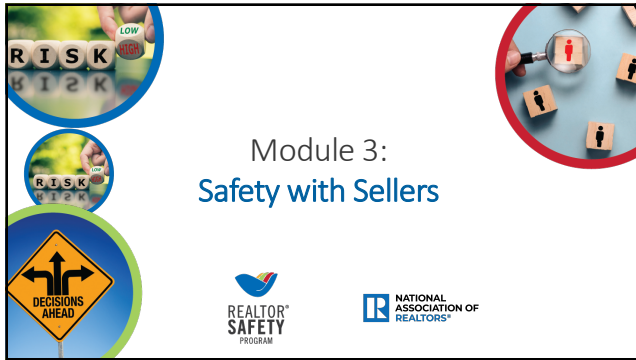
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More Safety Tips

- Quick exit
- Carry essentials only
- Take a photo
- Check your surroundings
- Lock up
- Use your car key fob
- Don't say vacant
- Wear flat-heeled shoes
- Evaluate the risk

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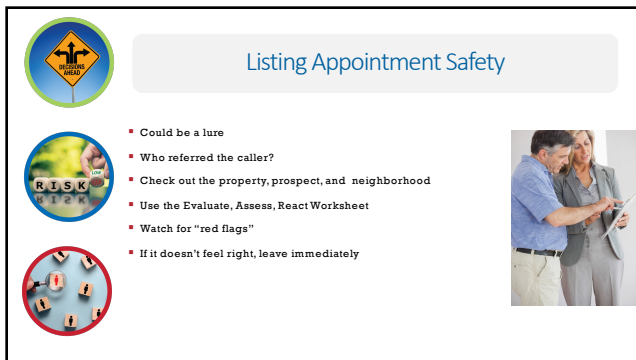


Module 3:
Safety with Sellers

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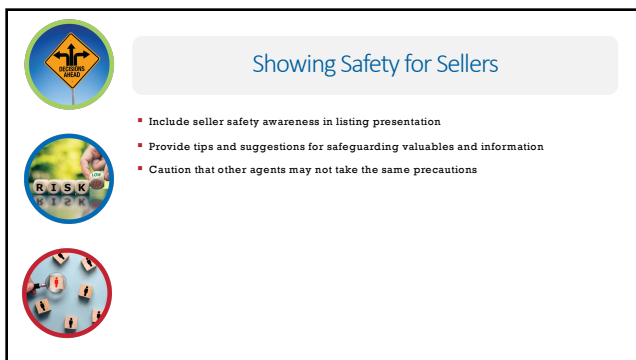
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Listing Appointment Safety

- Could be a lure
- Who referred the caller?
- Check out the property, prospect, and neighborhood
- Use the Evaluate, Assess, React Worksheet
- Watch for "red flags"
- If it doesn't feel right, leave immediately


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Showing Safety for Sellers

- Include seller safety awareness in listing presentation
- Provide tips and suggestions for safeguarding valuables and information
- Caution that other agents may not take the same precautions


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Staging for Safety

- Remove obstacles
- Secure or temporarily remove pets
- Safeguard valuables, personal information—credit cards, bills, checkbooks, mail, bank statements, family photos, and schedules
- Lock up firearms, ammunition, weapons, and knives, including the kitchen knife block
- Increase security while on the market


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Open House and Model Home Safety

- No opportunity to screen prospects
- Model homes in isolated locations
- Use the buddy system
- Familiarize yourself with the property—inside and outside
- Keep office, family, or a friend informed of your whereabouts and schedule


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Before the Open House



- Carry only essentials
- Familiarize yourself with the house and note confined areas to avoid
- Plan two escape routes
- Unlock the deadbolt locks for quick access to the outside
- Check around the outside of the house
- Keep basement and garage exits locked from inside
- Check mobile phone strength and signal
- Complete safety routine before admitting any visitors

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Visitor Sign-in

- Require sign-in
- Ask for identification
- State in publicity that identification is required
- Maintain separate sign-in and registration lists at model homes






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Closing Up

- Most vulnerable time—never assume the home is vacant
- Ask for help from a colleague, friend, or family at closing time
- Inform a contact when you begin closing
- Lock front door first
- Check all window locks
- Go from the top floor to the bottom and the back to the front, locking the doors behind you
- Check the backyard and garage






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Photograph and Virtual Tours

- Virtual tours can be used to case a home
- Items that will be removed for showing should be kept out of sight when shooting a video tour
- Geotagging
 - Embeds GPS metadata with digital photos
 - Location data posted with photo
 - Disable metadata on phones, cameras, but not GPS location tracking

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More Safety Tips

- Warn owners (and children) not to show their home by themselves
- Know the agent
- Lock up personal information
- Lock up prescription medicines
- Take a tour from a "stranger's viewpoint"
- Protect children's identity
- Identification required
- Inform neighbors
- Control open house traffic
- Watch out for the "white glove" test
- Perform post-showing check
- Place a "not for rent" sign in the window
- Increase surveillance

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Thank you for participating in this course!

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