

8 Steps for Staying Safe at ATMs

Consider how vulnerable you are when you stop to withdraw cash from an ATM. Whether you're in your car at a drive-up machine, on the street or in a building's lobby, you may be marked as a target by a criminal—a target with cash in hand. Follow these simple steps each time you head to the ATM, and reduce your risks:

1. Try to plan your visits to automatic teller during the day, rather than after dark.
2. Choose an ATM location in a busy public place.
3. If possible, take along a friend who can watch the surroundings while you are conducting your transactions.
4. Pre-plan your transaction carefully, and don't spend too much time at the machine.
5. When you make a withdrawal, quickly place the money in your purse or wallet and leave as soon as you finish your transaction.
6. Watch out for suspicious-looking people waiting around an ATM – they may not really be customers. If someone offers to let you go ahead of them, decline politely and leave.
7. When visiting a drive-through ATM, keep your doors locked and be prepared to drive away quickly. If anyone approaches your car on foot, roll up your window and drive off.
8. If you have not finished your transaction, and a suspicious character approaches you, press the CANCEL button, receive your card and leave quickly.

(Source: Louisiana REALTORS)