



## Put your safety first

Mobile phones are valuable – but there is nothing as valuable as your own safety. If you are threatened in any way, the most important thing for you to do is to protect yourself. Don't let yourself be harmed just for the sake of a mobile phone. You can always get another one.

## Act quickly

If you are unfortunate enough to have your mobile phone stolen, you should call your mobile phone network operator immediately so that they can cancel your number. This will automatically stop anyone from making calls on your mobile, even if they change the SIM card. You should also report it to the police.

The O<sub>2</sub> helpline is **0870 521 4000** or **100** from an O<sub>2</sub> mobile phone.

So, there are some basic safety tips. We hope you and your children find them useful.

The chances of being a victim of crime are low. Nevertheless, it does happen and it could happen to your children. Even if they are not hurt, but have their mobile phones taken, it is an upsetting and alarming experience.

The important thing to remember is that thieves are opportunistic. If your children are alert and well prepared, they won't make themselves an easy target and the thieves will look elsewhere.



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## O<sub>2</sub> Child Protection

Protecting your child against crime





## Protecting your child against crime

Many mobile phones are stolen and, often, it's young people who are the victims. Sadly, it is also often young people committing the crime.

More children now own a mobile phone than ever before. They're fun to have and can generally make life a lot more convenient. Mobiles can also make it safer because children can stay in close contact with their family and friends.

Mobile phones are valuable and that means, if you've got one, you've got to take extra care.

Children are particularly vulnerable because they are often not aware of the dangers around them. However, it's important that they are. By being more alert – and more careful about what they do and don't do – they can help prevent themselves becoming an easy target.

So, here are some tips to share with your children on keeping your mobile phone safe, and how to avoid drawing attention to yourself when using it.

### Keep your mobile in a safe place

Be careful about where you keep your mobile phone. You should try and keep it separate from your other valuable things, such as a purse or wallet. If you do keep it separate, it's less likely that a mugger will take it. It also means that, if you have your money stolen, you still have your mobile and so can call the police or home for help.

An ideal place to keep a mobile phone is in your inside jacket or coat pocket. If you have to keep it in an outer pocket, make sure it's a safe one. It's also a good idea to get a plain, dark coloured mobile phone case so you can disguise what type of mobile you have. This will also make it less noticeable.

Never leave your mobile anywhere unattended, and certainly don't lend it to any strangers or people you don't know well. If somebody desperately needs a phone – and you want to help them – you can always make a call for them.

### Protect it

Make sure you always use your mobile security PIN. If somebody then steals your mobile phone they'll have difficulty using it.

You should also keep a record of your IMEI number. This is a 15 digit serial number which can be found on a label, usually behind the battery. Or, you can key in **\*#06#** and the IMEI number will come up on your screen. The number is unique to your mobile phone and so will help you identify your mobile if it gets stolen.

You might also want to consider marking your mobile with your postcode. Again, this will help with identification at a later stage.

### Avoid risk

Try and keep to well lit areas when you are out and about and avoid dangerous shortcuts.

Before using your mobile phone, look around and see if it's safe. If you don't think it is, don't risk making a call, playing a game or sending a text – and don't be tempted to answer any calls.

You should switch the ring tone off and use the vibrate alert instead. Alternatively, you should let calls go straight through to your messaging service. That way you can choose not to answer a call and ring back or text at a time when you feel less vulnerable.

When you do use your mobile, hold it firmly so nobody can easily grab it from you. If you're walking down the road with your mobile phone in your hand, make sure you seem confident and alert. Keep looking to see if anyone is watching or listening to you.

Don't become so engrossed in a conversation, or in what you're texting, that you're unaware of what's happening around you. This is sometimes difficult but it's important to always remain alert.

Also be careful not to be overheard on your mobile giving personal information such as your name or address, or even your future plans. You never know what somebody else might do with this information.

### Be discreet

You should try not to draw too much attention to your mobile phone in public. Always be discreet with how you use it so you don't make yourself an obvious target for thieves.

A lot of people use texting in public places because it is so discreet. Nobody can hear what you're saying or who you're talking to. In most cases, people aren't even aware that you are using a mobile phone.

If you are talking on your mobile in a public place, make sure you don't talk too loudly. If you do, you're only drawing more attention to yourself.

You might also want to consider using a hands-free earpiece. This would allow you to keep your mobile phone out of sight and also keep your hands free.