

# Tips for a Safe Winter Break

Millions of students in the U.S. anxiously look forward to Winter Break each year. Unfortunately so do millions of criminals. The following is a brief list of some options you should consider before leaving for Winter Break. Remember to make responsible decisions while having a good time.

## Before you leave:

- Stow your valuable possessions out of sight ---in a closet, locked trunk, or a lockable storage area---or take them home with you.
- Be sure to **LOCK** your windows and doors (including the patio door) before you leave and double check it!!!
- Make sure your roommates understand the importance of locking up as well.
- Own a bicycle? Take it home or lock it to a stationary object in your room.
- Write down the serial numbers to all of your valuable electronic items. Store those numbers somewhere other than your residence.
- Visit <http://mupolice.missouri.edu/cp/> where you can register your bicycle, your laptop and access the printable form to record the serial numbers of your valuables.
- Engrave your valuable items with your driver's license number and/or your name (NOT your Social Security Number).
- Leave your porch lights on (both front and back ones). Criminals prefer the cover of darkness. Consider using timers on lights to give the impression that your home is occupied. Timers are not expensive, and they are much cheaper than replacing valuable property.
- Ask someone who is staying in town to keep an eye on your place and change which lights in the residence are on to make it appear someone is home.
- Place your mail on hold with USPS (<https://holdmail.usps.com/holdmail/>)
- Consider renter's insurance.
- If you live on campus let your CA know you will be gone and when you expect to return.
- **Check your vehicle:** If leaving your vehicle ensure that it is locked and consider moving it to a more well-traveled area, as opposed to parking it in a secluded area.



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## If driving to your destination:

Check your fluid levels and tire pressure to ensure safety. Charge your cell phone prior to leaving.

Try and maintain at least 1/2 tank of gas so you don't find yourself stranded or forced to stop someplace unsafe.

Stop at least every four hours to ensure that you are refreshed and not sleepy.

Consider swapping drivers if driving for long periods.

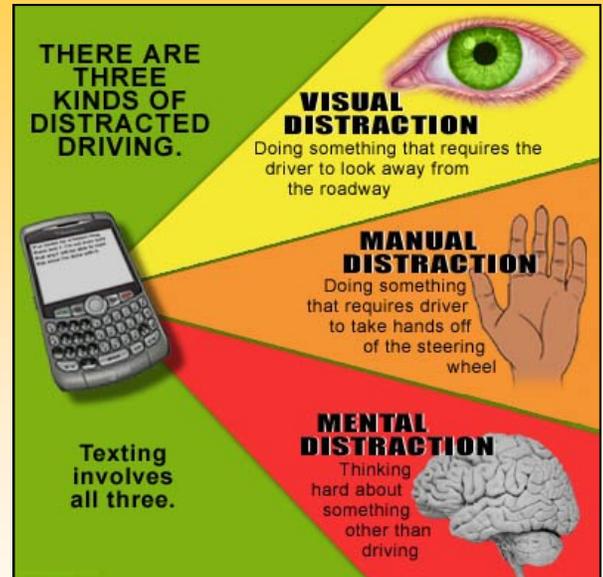
Know where you are going before you leave and know the route you are taking.

Let someone know when you are leaving and when you are scheduled to arrive.

Do not drink or use medication/drugs while driving.

Wear your seat belt.

If the weather is bad, allow extra time for getting to your destination. Have provisions in the car in case you get stranded (first aid kit, coat, flashlight, blanket)



If you have further questions, please feel free to contact the University Police Department.

573-882-7201