



SHINE BRIGHT

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As a real estate professional, you face potentially risky situations every day - showing homes, conducting open houses, even walking to your car after dark.

A 2017 Member Safety Report compiled by the National Association of Realtors® (NAR) noted that 38 percent of real estate agents found themselves in a situation that made them fear for their personal safety. 52 percent of men and 57 percent of women carried self-defense weapons of some sort, pepper spray the most common - and 44 percent are using a smart phone safety app.

That is a good beginning. But now more than ever, it is essential for every agent to take precautions, make safe decisions and know what to do if confronted with trouble.

From NAR and other sources, here are 15 common-sense tips every working agent should know:

1. Let at least one personal contact and your office know where you are at all times.
2. Don't agree to a private showing unless you have first met the client in your office.
3. Ask clients to complete an information form, including name, phone number, and driver's license number at open houses and before scheduling a private showing. If they balk, explain that it is a safety precaution.
4. Bring a co-worker along whenever possible.
5. Let the client precede you into a private showing.
6. Drive the neighborhood before an open house or showing. It helps to know the area and be alert to safety concerns.
7. Identify all of a home's doors and exits - and keep them unlocked - before a private showing and during an open house.
8. Take a self-defense class.
9. Don't allow a client to ride in your car unless you know them well enough to feel comfortable.
10. Don't wear expensive jewelry.
11. Consider leaving your purse in the trunk of your car, carry only essentials with you.
12. Dress professionally.
13. Buy a security app for your cell phone, and keep the phone in your hands.
14. Be ready to defend yourself; travel with pepper spray
15. Trust your instincts. If something doesn't feel right, remove yourself from the situation and don't worry about offending a client. Your safety is paramount.



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