

# Oklahoma Personal Defense

## Empowering Women to Protect Themselves

### Situational Awareness Tips

by Tammy Pinkston, Instructor

*Ladies, it's time to overcome your natural desire to nurture and stop being so nice. Don't think about it as being rude, rather think of it as being nice to yourself because you are protecting yourself!*

**The awareness mindset must go with you always! It is a lifestyle, not something you turn on and off as needed. You ALWAYS need it!**

Here are a few of my own situational awareness, personal defense tactics that I have employed and always use...

When you get in your car immediately lock the doors, start the car and get moving as soon as possible.

When pulling up to a drive through, pull your car as close to the building as possible, allowing little or no space for someone to walk up beside your car. Little space means they will struggle to get to you on the driver's side.

When you come out of a store and you have a cart full of things to unload into your trunk, position your body between the back of your car and the cart – this provides a barrier to easy access. Stay erect and alert as you're loading items into the trunk – do not turn your back to the parking lot.

Pay attention when you come up to a stoplight or stop sign. If you see someone loitering around, be particularly vigilant to watch them. Don't hesitate to drive away, lurch your car, or whatever you need to do to keep someone from approaching your car.

If you like to drive with your window down, only roll it down a few inches so there's not easy access for someone to stick their arm in the window. NEVER roll down the passenger window.

If your bank doesn't have good lighting around the outside of the building, call and tell them you'd be happy to bank somewhere else if they're not concerned about their customer's personal security.

When pulling up to an ATM, LOOK AROUND. If you see someone loitering, DON'T STOP. If there are shrubs or other obstacles where someone can hide, again, call your bank.

Always look around for anyone paying unnecessary attention to you (walking toward you, getting in your personal space, staring at you). Keep your head up, remain alert, make eye contact. This demeanor presents you as confident rather than an unaware, easy target.

Pay attention while driving, if someone has been behind you for awhile, turn off and see if they stay behind you. If you suspect you're being followed, don't pull into your driveway, drive to the nearest police station.