

Realtor Safety Tips:

1. Always meet a client for the first time in the office. Introduce him or her to coworkers and make it clear that they know you are taking him out of the office. Try to take separate cars but if that is not possible you will have slightly more control if you drive. Do not meet a client at the property, particularly if he is calling on a yard sign. He will already have had a chance to note if the property is vacant.
2. Get a license plate number and leave it at the front desk. Just explain that it is office policy; a customer who means no harm won't mind. You might also leave an itinerary for your house tour.
3. Don't identify a property as vacant to a caller on an ad or sign.
4. When showing property to a stranger, follow rather than lead him through the house. Don't let him get between you and the door. At an open house, take up a position as close to the door as practical.
5. Always carry a cell phone where it is easily accessible (not in the purse you left in the car or stowed in a kitchen cabinet.) Make sure emergency numbers are programmed into the speed dial.
6. Ask the office manager to control keys to the office and to place deadbolts on the doors. If you are alone in the office at night draw the shades and do not admit anyone you do not know well and trust.
7. If legal in your state purchase a personal safety protection device such as a pepper spray, stun gun, personal alarm or a taser and keep it available.
8. Go with your gut. If something doesn't feel right, if anything raises the hair on the back of your neck escape the situation immediately. You might feel like an idiot but don't worry about it.

Police have also noted an increase in crimes where a woman sets up the victim, even for sexual assault. Women agents tend to be much more trusting of another female and let down their guard. Until you really know a customer, remain vigilant regardless of the gender, appearance, dress, or charm. It could save your life.