

# Violence in public places

## Prevention advice

### Getting around safely

If you feel unsafe in a public place, think about adjusting your behaviour. The idea is to detect threats early on, defuse dangerous situations and get potential aggressors to think again.

Being armed can have the opposite effect. Police advice is that it is generally a bad idea to carry any weapon (knives, capsicum spray etc.)

Media reports about violence in public places, such as fights in the street or on trains, can cause anxiety and make one feel unsafe. There are things you can do, though.

#### Getting around safely in public places

Feeling uneasy in a public place? Here are a few tips:

- Pay attention to your surroundings. Listen to your intuition and follow your gut feeling to avoid threatening situations.
- Keep your distance and quickly get out of menacing circumstances. Move to a safer

place, i.e. cross the street, move to a different train compartment, enter a shop or restaurant.

- Use words such as 'sir' or 'ma'am' to address the aggressor as a signal to third parties that you are not merely having an argument with someone you know.
- Refrain from verbal abuse and do not get physical.
- Engage others (third-parties, onlookers, bystanders etc. – 'Hello, you in the green jacket ---'). Describe the situation and ask for help.
- In an emergency, call police on 110 and lodge a criminal complaint.

Take a moment to mentally prepare for threatening scenarios. This will make it easier to act when necessary and help you exude self-confidence, which can serve as a deterrence to potential attackers.