

TOP TIPS:

What to do if you are being stalked



Stalking is a crime in England and Wales under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, in Scotland under the Criminal Justice and Licensing Act 2010, and is dealt with in Northern Ireland under the Protection from Harassment Order (NI) 1997. Stalking is described as a pattern of unwanted and persistent behaviour that is motivated by a fixation or obsession that causes a victim to suffer alarm, distress or a fear of violence. The law states that it's illegal for a person to pursue a course of conduct that they know or ought to know amounts to stalking. A course of conduct refers to two or more incidents of unwanted behaviour.

For detailed advice and safety planning please contact the National Stalking Helpline on 0808 802 0300 or on advice@stalkinghelpline.org

Talk to someone

The most important thing is to tell someone. Stalking thrives on secrecy - if people know they can help to keep you safe. You can contact the National Stalking Helpline on for advice about your options and safety planning. To report incidents to the police, call 101, but if you ever feel in danger, call 999 immediately.

Record what's happening

Keep a log of any incidents and any evidence you may have. A log can help you and support services see if your situation is escalating and better understand if there is a pattern of behaviour. Importantly, if you report to the police it allows them to see that these are not isolated incidents. Please remember that you do not need to have made a log, or have collected evidence to make a report to the police – it can help make the situation clearer to them, however the police only need to have a reasonable belief that a crime has taken place to investigate.

Take digital safety seriously

About 40% of people who contact us have experienced some form of cyber or digitally-enabled stalking.



www.stalkinghelpline.org
advice@stalkinghelpline.org
 facebook.com/suzylamplughtrust
 [@live_life_safe](https://twitter.com/live_life_safe)



THE MYTHS & REALITIES OF STALKING



We advise you to:

- Ensure your devices have not been compromised – if your stalker has ever had access to your phone or any other device, or you think they may have been hacked turn the device off immediately and seek professional advice
- Review your privacy settings on all social media, and encourage friends and family to do the same
- Review your online presence by typing your name on search engines to see what information is available to the public
- Change email, social media and bank account passwords regularly, and ensure that security questions can't be guessed or are answers your stalker could know
- Ensure yourself and friends and family don't post pictures / details online that can reveal your location or information about you

Vary your routine and use a buddy system

If you are being followed, watched, or think your stalker may engage in those behaviours then we often we advise victims to look at ways that they can vary their routine to increase safety. For example, changing the route you take to and from work as well as leaving and arriving at different times.

We often advise people experiencing stalking to implement a buddy system with a trusted friend or family member so someone else is always on alert should you not arrive somewhere when you are expected to. A buddy system involves letting someone know whenever you are going somewhere, who you are meeting (if appropriate), when they should expect you to check in, and what to do if you do not check in with them.


Call the police

If at any point, you feel unsafe we would advise that you call **999**. We want the police to be on board in these situations and on board as early as possible. We know that the sooner there's some form of formal intervention the sooner it's likely to stop. We know that stalkers don't generally stop on their own.

Seek emotional support

Experiencing stalking is very distressing and we always recommend that people try to get some emotional support to cope with their situation. If you want to get some support then talking to your GP can be a good first step, or you can contact the Samaritans any time on **116 123** if you just need someone to talk to.



www.stalkinghelpline.org
advice@stalkinghelpline.org
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