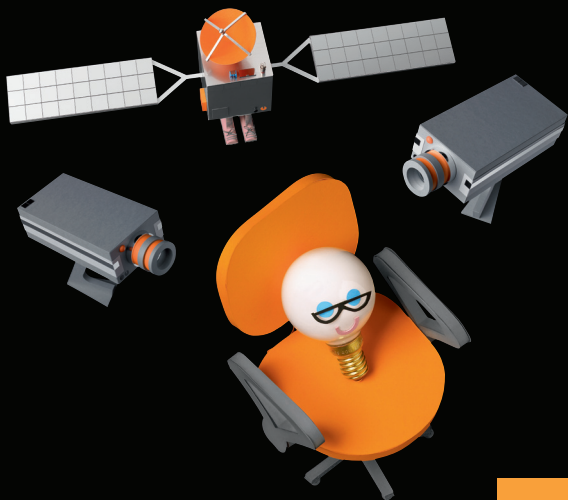


the Orange guide to working alone safely



introduction



More than three quarters of Britain's employees now work alone for part or all of their normal working day¹. Flexible working practices mean more people are regularly away from an office base as part of their job; we're now spending more and more of our working time on our own, and, while it's most often perfectly safe to do so, it's also sensible to be aware of the ways you can protect yourself.

Orange and Suzy Lamplugh Trust have teamed up to offer advice on how to keep safe and feeling confident when working alone. Keep reading to find out more about how to feel secure and prepared, whether you're travelling to meetings, making home visits, or just working with people you haven't met before.

46%

of people in full time employment count themselves as lone workers.

79%

of lone workers spend over 50% of their time working away from their office.

31%

of lone workers would prefer to contact emergency services if they found themselves in an uncomfortable situation.

38%

of lone workers feel positive about the speed at which their employer is alerted if they were to miss or be delayed for an appointment without an explanation.

53%

of lone workers believe their employers do all they can to keep them safe when working out of the office.

70%

of people would use a mobile phone to make a call if uncomfortable.

46%

of people would contact a colleague or employer first when they found themselves in an uncomfortable situation when working alone.

49%

of people have experienced discomfort from the behaviour of someone they've encountered whilst working alone.

am I a lone worker?

The Health and Safety Executive's definition of a lone worker is someone who "work[s] by themselves without close or direct supervision". Some examples are:

- Self-employed people
- Those who work away from an office base, for example in transport, painting and decorating, electrical or repair work, or in the community such as police officers, social workers etc.
- People who work outside of traditional 9-5 office hours, like factory security staff or night cleaners
- Mobile workers, like salespeople, who may be on their own for long periods of the working day
- People who work from home

It might not even have crossed your mind, but if you spend any part of your working day alone – if you're in the office on your own, travelling between meetings, or even working from home or a café – either regularly or just now and again, you could be described as a 'lone worker'.

what does this mean for me?

All employers in the UK have a legal responsibility to protect the health and safety of their employees whilst they are at work, in compliance with the following legislation:

- The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

Businesses can ensure they are meeting their legal requirements towards employees who work alone by:

- Carrying out risk assessments of every role affected and reviewing these regularly. If an organisation has five or more employees, it's a legal requirement for any risk assessments to be in writing
- Consulting on, and introducing relevant safety policies and procedures (and making sure they're followed)
- Offering guidance and training about how to deal with any scenarios employees might encounter when working alone

More information can be found on the Health and Safety Executive website at www.hse.gov.uk/risk/casestudies

46%

of people in full time employment count themselves as lone workers. When questioned further, the term actually applies to 71%ⁱⁱ

79%

More than three quarters (79%) of lone workers spend over 50% of their time away from an office or employer property, while 23% spend their entire working time in this wayⁱ

what else can my employer do to help me?

With mobile working tools becoming more and more common in business, it's probably not surprising that 75% of lone workers are currently provided with mobile phones, and 41% are given laptops or netbooks with mobile internet access from their employers¹.

Other tools are available for people working alone, like a discreet alarm button that can be attached to clothing or a simple phone application, which can connect back to your office or a central help desk at a single touch. GPS (Global Positioning System) tracking can also be enabled on these tools, so that if you're not where your team expects you to be (for example, if an appointment takes a lot longer than expected), colleagues can be alerted and check that you're ok.

These tools can't prevent tough situations, or help you to deal with one if it does happen, but they can give you and your boss peace of mind that emergency help can be summoned if needed when you're working alone.

53%

Only half of lone workers (53%) currently believe their employers do all they can to keep them safe while working out of the office¹



what if I'm self employed?

Common sense and ensuring you're clued up about how to avoid and deal with potentially threatening situations always applies, whoever you're working for.

If you hot desk in other people's offices for example, or travel to and from customer meetings, you are still working alone and can take advantage of these tips to help you face common scenarios.

“ It doesn't matter how large or small your business is, keeping safe while at work has to be a priority. Sometimes, just having something like a mobile phone is enough to boost confidence. But if that's not enough, there are more targeted tools and training out there that can help you feel safe and prepared whenever you're working alone. ”

Martin Stiven

Vice President of Business at Orange,
part of Everything Everywhere

tips for working alone

on the road – public and private transport

It's important when travelling to plan ahead, so that you know where you're going, can keep relaxed about your next step, and arrive at your appointment at the expected time. It's also a good idea to let someone know where you're going and when you expect to be back; a simple step that many of us can often forget.

When you're using public transport, try to have your money or ticket to hand when you need it, so you're not fumbling around with your wallet or purse in public.

what if...

I'm on a train and my carriage empties out, leaving just me and one other person or group?

- If you don't feel comfortable, don't be embarrassed to move to another seat or carriage. The same applies if you feel that someone's behaviour is threatening in any way, like uncomfortable stares or putting their feet up on the seats next to you



what if...

Something happens near me – if I see a pick pocket on a bus or someone behaving in a threatening way on a train?

- On a bus, alert the bus driver: they are trained to know what to do, and can radio for help immediately if it's needed
- On a train, discreetly pull the emergency alarm to alert the staff, who will be trained to deal with difficult situations

what if...

I'm driving and have to park in a dodgy looking area?

- Make sure that no personal possessions are visible from the outside of the car – even if they're of little value, it's best to put everything in the boot or take it with you
- Look out for street lamps and junctions and park nearby so that the car can be seen easily

what if...

An unmarked police car indicates for me to pull over?

- Unmarked police cars normally only have one distinguishing feature from a normal car – blue lights. The police offer the following advice:

“ Police in the majority of cases will use their blue lights to attract the attention of motorists who they require to stop. If you are concerned that a vehicle is not genuine then you should drive in a normal manner to either a police station or other well lit public area. Additionally, if you possess a mobile phone and can do so legally, dial 999 and obtain police assistance ”

walking

Walking through an area that you're not familiar with – particularly during the winter months when it gets dark early – can be slightly intimidating.

49%

Nearly half (49%) of people have been made to feel uncomfortable by the behaviour of someone they've come into contact with while working alone⁸

A couple of basic rules are to keep items like your mobile phone or MP3 player in your pocket or bag, and stick to streets with good lighting and lots of people, whenever possible. You should also:

- Avoid passing stationary cars with their engines running and people sitting in them
- Walk facing oncoming traffic to avoid kerb crawlers and, if a vehicle pulls up suddenly alongside you, turn and walk in the other direction – you can turn much faster than a car
- Keep your mind on your surroundings – remember if you're wearing a personal stereo for example, you might not hear trouble approaching

what if...

I think that someone's following me?

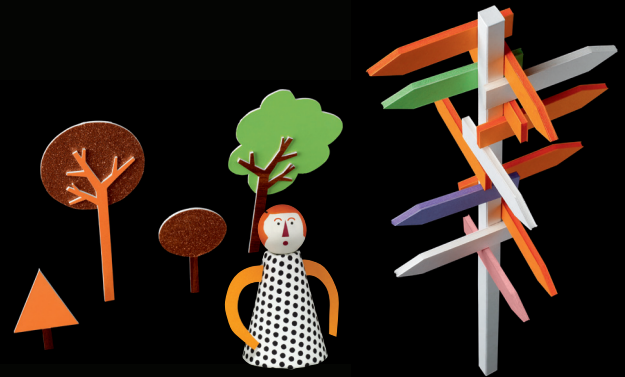
- Try crossing the road to check that they are following, more than once if necessary. If they are still behind you, head for somewhere that you know is going to be busy, and where you'll be able to get some help if you need to

- If you're heading back to an empty home, try to change your plans and go to a friend's house or somewhere public like a pub or garage, where you can be with other people

what if...

There's a group of people nearby who are being rowdy and seem quite threatening?

- Move away to avoid the situation if possible – for example, cross the road or take a short detour
- If you think that someone else's safety might be in danger, look for a safe place to stop and then call the police



home and customer visits

Most people will, at some point in their working life, have to meet someone new in an unfamiliar setting. Additionally, in some lines of business it's necessary to make house calls or visit other people's offices on a regular basis.



When meeting clients or customers you don't know well, it's important to keep your personal safety in mind at all times. Try to ensure that someone knows where you will be, when you expect to return and what to do if you don't return when expected. Think ahead - what do you know about the person you are meeting? Are they likely to be agitated or angry about something? What about the location of the meeting - will other people be there or close by or is it isolated? The job you are there to do could also be relevant - are you there to give them bad news or will you have to say no to them for any reason? Thinking about any possible risks in advance will enable you to either reduce them or help prepare you to deal with them.

Catherine Skinner
Director, Suzy Lamplugh Trust



what if...

I receive unwanted or inappropriate personal attention?

- If possible, move away from the person demonstrating the behaviour
- If you're alone in someone's home or office and don't know the person you're with but feel confident enough, an assertive

'take your hands off me' or a very clear 'no' may make the person stop. If there are other people around, this might also alert them to what's going on

- If you know the person showing you unwanted attention, it's important that you appear to be in control of the situation. Remember, you have a right to say 'no', and that 'no' means 'no'
- If you have a panic button, press this as soon as you feel uncomfortable to raise the alarm
- It's a good idea to have a 'code word' with your friends and colleagues. That way, if you have a problem with someone you meet, you can make an excuse to call one of your contacts and let them know that you need help, without alerting the person you're with
- If none of the above is successful and you still feel uncomfortable, leave the premises and report what happened to your employers – that way, if another visit needs to take place for any reason, colleagues will not visit alone and will be prepared

46%

of people would be most likely to contact a colleague or employer before anyone else if they found themselves in an uncomfortable situation when working aloneⁱ

70%

would like to use a mobile to make a call if uncomfortable, while 18% would like to have a panic button or other discreet device to send an emergency alertⁱ

working from home or in the office alone



Even if you feel at your safest at home or in your office, it's still useful to be prepared for the things that can happen when you're working somewhere on your own; getting an unexpected visitor or knock at the door for example. And as we're now living in an increasingly connected world, it's important to be aware of online safety too.

what if...

The doorbell rings and I'm not expecting anyone?

- Unless it's the police or a bailiff carrying a warrant, there is never an obligation to let anyone into your home or place of work
- Where possible, open the door with a chain on until some satisfactory I.D. can be shown (always examine identification cards carefully)
- If you have a back door, make sure it's locked before you answer the front door – some thieves work in pairs
- If you're not comfortable with the person at the door and what they're asking about or for, ask them to leave and either come back at an appointed time when you can have someone with you, or contact you in another way instead

what if...

I want to talk to people online and keep them up to date with what I'm doing?

- It's important to be aware of the information you are sharing online. For example, if you share your date of birth and your full name and then disclose your location on social networking sites, it's possible for other people to piece together where you live. If you're alone, it's best not to mention this, just in case.

For more information on how to stay safe online, you can visit www.orange.co.uk/safety

how can I prepare for working on my own?



There are ways to try to prevent and avoid aggression and violence developing when working alone. You are the best person to decide what will work for you and what is practical in your situation, but the thing to remember is that thinking ahead can help you to feel safe when working alone, and make sure you avoid trouble wherever possible.

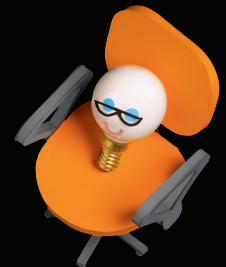
Suzy Lamplugh Trust



It's pretty much common sense, but we all know that common sense can be easily forgotten – so it's worth reminding yourself of some common personal safety principles every so often:

prepare

- Take a few minutes to think about what you're doing and where you are going before you set off
- Is it practical to let someone know where you're going and when you'll be back? This could make all the difference if help is needed



how can I prepare for working on my own?

look confident

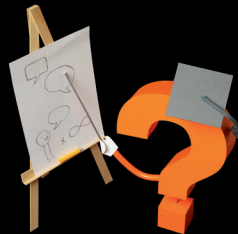
- Look purposeful, be alert, hold your head up and be aware of your surroundings. People who look confident are less likely to attract the wrong kind of attention
- Even if things aren't going to plan, e.g. you've taken a wrong turning, try not to let it show. Take a few moments to re-think before you set off again

act to avoid risk

- Your choices and actions can have a big impact on your personal safety. Make the decision that's more likely to avoid risk, e.g. choose a longer, well-lit route instead of a darker shortcut
- Assess and re-assess situations to help yourself become aware of risks as early as possible

never assume

- That any fears are unfounded. Trust your instincts: they are there to warn you of possible danger
- That it won't happen to you. Don't become complacent
- That people are what they seem. Appearances can be deceptive



what if a situation goes wrong?

Try communicating with the person making you feel threatened – this can be one of the most successful ways to prevent aggressive situations developing.

- Talk yourself out of a problem – placate rather than provoke
- Speak gently, slowly and clearly
- Think about your body language – are you sending the messages you want to?
- Be aware of personal space – everyone is different
- Avoid touching someone who is angry, e.g. putting a hand on their arm
- Walk away from the situation if at all possible
- Be assertive, but not aggressive – this will only escalate the situation

31%

of lone workers would prefer to contact the emergency services as a first line of defence if they found themselves in an uncomfortable or threatening situation¹

38%

of lone workers would feel positive about their employer having the ability to be alerted quickly if they were to miss or be significantly delayed at an appointment without explanation¹

if all else fails...

Remember – your aim is to

get away!

- Use your voice – make lots of noise. This can deter an attacker, and get other people's attention
- If you have a personal alarm, use it
- If you have a panic button, press it
- If you have a mobile phone, use it
- Shout specific instructions if other people are around: "Call the Police!" will let people know that you need help
- Your safety is always more important than your money or belongings. These can be replaced, even if it doesn't feel like it at the time – so hand them over rather than risk the situation becoming worse
- Get away from the person or group and find a pub or safe place where you can ask to borrow a phone, and then call the police



how do I report an incident that's happened at work?

- Talk to your manager or HR contact and follow your employer's processes to report incidents and near misses
- Reporting accidents and ill health at work is a legal requirement under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR), and businesses should ensure they have the correct processes in place to be compliant

where can I go for help or advice?

- Personal safety: www.suzylampugh.org
- Online safety: www.orange.co.uk/safety
- Lone worker solutions: www.orange.co.uk/business/loneworker



¹ Figures from research carried out by RedShift Research on behalf of Orange in May 2010, with a base of 1000 people in the UK who defined themselves as lone workers.

² Figures from research carried out by RedShift Research on behalf of Orange in January 2011, with a base of 1000 people in the UK in full time employment.

about us

about Orange

Orange is the key brand of the France Telecom Group, one of the world's leading telecommunications operators. On July 1 2010, the company became part of Everything Everywhere, one company that runs two of Britain's most famous brands - Orange UK and T-Mobile UK - with plans to transform the industry by giving customers instant access to everything, everywhere, offering them the best value, best choice and best network coverage in the country.

about our partnerships with Guardian24 and PeopleSafe

Orange has two strategic partners to support its lone worker solution and help organisations support their employees when off site, with public sector specialists Guardian24, and private sector experts Peoplesafe. The solution and partnerships have been designed to offer organisations the tools to give employers and employees alike the peace of mind that emergency help for people working alone can be summoned if needed.

about Suzy Lamplugh Trust

Suzy Lamplugh Trust works to raise awareness of the importance of personal safety in order to help people to avoid violence and aggression and live safer, more confident lives. The Trust works alongside government, the police, the educational establishment, public bodies and the business sector to encourage safety wherever people may be at risk - in the home, at work, in public and in schools and colleges, on public transport and when travelling at home or abroad.



We hope that you've found the information in this guide useful and that it helps you plan solutions for yourself or your business. Just remember that it isn't a replacement for taking legal advice for your individual business or considering what specific measures are appropriate for you. February 2011.

Everything Everywhere Limited
Registered Office:
Hatfield Business Park,
Hatfield,
Hertfordshire,
AL10 9BW

www.orange.co.uk

