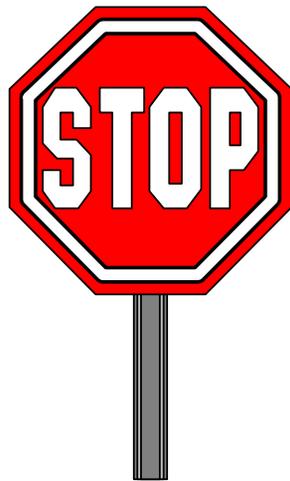


# THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW WHEN STOPPED BY THE POLICE



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**If I am stopped by the police, do I have to answer their questions?**

**Rule:** No.

**Common sense:** It's not a crime to refuse to answer questions, but refusing to answer can make the police suspicious about you or even angry or abusive. You can't be arrested merely for refusing to identify yourself on the street. Remember that what you say to the police is important. What you say can be used against you, and it can give the police an excuse to arrest you. It's a bad idea to give false information. Giving someone else's name is a crime. Although it's not required, it's generally a good idea to carry a picture ID to avoid extra problems with the police.

## **Do the police have the right to search me or my property?**

**Rule:** Generally, no but the police may pat down your clothing if they suspect a concealed weapon.

**Common sense:** Don't physically resist but make it clear that you don't consent to any further search. If they search you anyway, do not resist physically, just keep saying that you don't consent so others can hear. You don't have to consent to any search of yourself, your car or your house. If you **do** consent to a search, it can affect your rights later in court. If the police say they have a search warrant **ask to see it.**

## **What can I do if stopped or arrested by the police?**

- **Stay calm.** If you become excited, angry or nervous, it is more likely that the police will too.
- **Memorize the policeman's badge number.** Only ask for the badge number if you can't otherwise see it.
- **If arrested, ask for a lawyer.** Once you ask for a lawyer the police are not supposed to ask you for anything else and you are not required to give any additional information. **Don't be fooled** if the police say they want to make a special deal with you or that they are going to let you go. Don't let anyone, including your parents, pressure you into giving more information without having a lawyer present.
- **Don't curse or argue with the police.** They may then charge you with disorderly conduct or resisting arrest.
- **Don't touch a cop and keep your hands where the police can see them.**
- **Don't run and don't resist arrest.**
- **Don't:**
  - Roll your eyes**
  - Suck your teeth**
  - Cross your arms over your chest**
  - Smack on gum**
  - Make signs with your fingers**

Body language is very important, so try to avoid any movement which could make the police irritated.

- **Write** down everything you remember about what happened as soon as possible
- **Find witnesses** and their names and phone numbers. If you have been injured take photos of the injuries (after you have sought medical attention).

### **Additional Pointers**

**Remember to look out for one another.** If you see the police stopping anyone: **STOP, WATCH, AND LISTEN!** If possible, write down everything that happens, including the badge numbers of the police. Just your presence can prevent the police from being violent! **BUT DON'T EVER PUT YOURSELF INTO A DANGEROUS SITUATION!**

#### **If you are harassed: Make a Complaint as soon as Possible.**

1. Call the precinct where you were harassed and complain directly to the captain. Give the specifics of the incident, where it happened, when it happened and the officer's badge number. If other people were with you when it happened, have each of them make a complaint also. You can get the precinct number by calling (212) 374-5000.
2. Call the Civilian Complaint Review Board at (212) 442-8833 (24 hours a day) and tell them the same information.
3. Call the Complaint Desk, Internal Affairs Division at (212) 741-8401 and tell them the same information.
4. If you were harassed by a Transit Cop, call the Transit Police Civilian Complaint Unit at (212) 741-8401 and tell them the same information.

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