



Coin Show Tactics for Dealers

Doug Davis- Founder/President NCIC Bryan Davis- Crime Analyst

Dealers who participate in coin shows are potential targets of numismatic predators. The following tactics and practices provide dealers and their employees with a basic safety plan that will help reduce the chances of becoming a numismatic crime victim.

1. Take the time to learn about the show you will be attending and the area in which it is located.
2. Contact the bourse chairman to answer any additional questions such as location of loading and unloading areas. (Possible construction areas, road closings close to venue etc.,)
3. If traveling by personal car plan most direct route and determine any construction or choke points (Contact State Police or State Transportation Department for this type of information). Identify any potential weather issues that would cause travel problems. Determine if there are any cellphone dead spots along your route. Always be alert to suspicious vehicles.
4. Travel with someone and let a family member know your route and estimated time of arrival.
5. Inventory coins and leave copy on home/office computer. (Downloading to a flash drive provides an additional layer of documentation)
6. Upon arrival locate unloading area and make sure adequate security is in place while unloading (loading). Before exiting your vehicle look around for any suspicious persons, vehicles or activity.
7. Do not let cell phones distract you (Texting and talking) while loading and unloading.
8. Once you have unloaded do not park in a secluded parking lot or one that does not have adequate lighting after dark.
9. Always be alert to the surroundings when going to and from your vehicle. Do not use cell phone.
10. If you are arriving by air and taking a cab, shuttle or limousine to the show do not take your eyes off your bags until they are secured within the vehicle. In situations where you are using a shuttle stay at the rear until the last piece of luggage is loaded and then board. (Do not let any distraction cause you to take your eyes off of your bags)
11. If possible keep the most valuable bag in your possession.
12. Do not advertise you are a coin dealer and going to the coin show.
13. When you get to the show and exit the vehicle be alert to the surroundings while your bags are being unloaded. (Do not let any distraction cause you take your eyes off of your bags)
14. Once inside the show check-in and immediately put on your show credentials.
15. When you arrive at your table secure inventory behind table before you start arranging cases, lamps and chairs. DO NOT LEAVE ANYTHING IN AISLE.
16. Identify who is on each side and behind you.

17. Do not let other dealers or early birds look at coins until set-up is complete. This will eliminate any distractions and maintains control of inventory.
18. Do not display more material than you can control.
19. Once set-up is complete take photos with your phone to document your presence at show. (Insurance and Law Enforcement purposes).
20. Take photos of individual cases. (Insurance and Law Enforcement purposes)
21. Use extra cases on backup table to secure additional inventory, money bags and invoices.
22. Do not keep cash, invoices, checkbooks or itemized inventory listing in same location.
23. Secure briefcases to backup table with cable locks.
24. If you occupy a corner table make sure back-up inventory cannot be reached by customers.
25. Look around and locate all exits emergency and non-emergency. Familiarize yourself with the entire room.
26. Fire Alarms – Know the protocol of the facility if a fire alarm is tripped and mandatory evacuation is required (real or false).
27. Develop a mental plan of escape if an emergency arises that requires immediate evacuation of the bourse floor.
- 28. Keep a small LED flashlight within easy reach in case of power failure within the bourse floor (It does happen!!).**
29. If lights go out illuminate flashlight and have customers push back away from the table and remain seated. Close cases immediately.
30. Cases should be locked at all times including those on backup table.
31. Be familiar with security personnel.
32. Know how to contact security during the show if needed.
33. Know how to contact a show representative during the show if needed.
34. Know how to contact a show representative after show closes in case of an accident or medical emergency.
35. When dealing with customers show only one coin at a time.
36. If you are alone do not show coins to multiple customers at one time. Suspects working in pairs often utilize this method to keep a dealer distracted.
37. Coin thieves will migrate to dealer tables that are extremely busy and easily distracted.
38. Coin thieves look for dealers who are **vulnerable**.
39. In many cases a person's unusual head and eye movements raise suspicious red flags.
40. Always watch a person's hands carefully.
41. Do not let customers place personal items on show case.
42. When showing raw coins watch hand movements for palming of coins. In many cases a person looking through a box will pull out several coins hold in palm and continue to look through box.
43. Closely watch persons who pull out several coins lay them out on case and continue to look through box. This creates an additional distraction and allows for easy palming.
44. Be aware that suspects may work in pairs. (Males or Male and Female)
45. Remember there is no distinctive profile of what a thief looks like!!
46. When working in pairs the M.O is for one suspect to be looking at coins while the other one asks questions to create a distraction.

47. Do not let customers pull out their coins for comparison unless you are watching carefully. In some cases this could be used as a means of switching coins/paper money.
48. Do not turn your back to customers.
49. Be suspicious of persons asking unsolicited questions about your travel or value of inventory.
50. Never divulge to any person you do not know that you are traveling alone.
51. Utilize your cell phone camera/video to photograph/video and document suspicious persons.
52. Alert security of suspicious persons or activity on the bourse floor.
- 53. Distractions** – Organized groups will often use distraction methods such as a person fainting, fake heart attack or dropping a small child to open a window of opportunity for an accomplice to steal while at your table.
54. Due to the quality of counterfeits carefully evaluate all purchases from the public. (Suspects will try to sell counterfeits to dealers who are extremely busy and will not take the time to carefully examine the coins)
55. If you take a check for purchases - photograph check and identification (require two types of ID) with your cell phone camera. Carefully evaluate photo identification for quality and make sure the photo matches the person making the transaction (Although be aware that good counterfeit ID's will have matching photos). The address on the check and identification should match. Do not take postdated checks. If you are still suspicious ask for other pieces of identification.
- 56. Immediately place large cash transactions in money bags and lock in showcase. Do not display stacks of cash in showcases.**
57. If you need to leave your table, lock all cases and alert dealers next to you or in back that you will return shortly.
58. **Develop and maintain a personal contingency plan:** **a.** if traveling alone keep a list of any medical conditions, medications and emergency contact numbers inside your wallet or purse **b.** If you have a medical condition that may be incapacitating such as diabetes or epilepsy make sure someone at the show is aware of a potential problem **c.** Make sure a family member and fellow dealer in attendance at the show know where you are staying **d.** Travel with adequate medications **e.** Identify someone at the show who can secure and take possession of your inventory in case of accident or medical emergency.
59. When leaving the show at the end of the day do not carry large sums of cash or inventory.
60. Talk with security or show representatives to identify safe and unsafe venues within the area.
61. Take off all show credentials before leaving the building.
62. Do not talk about your business dealings in a public forum (restaurants, bars etc.,).Remember there is no specific profile of what a coin thief looks like.
63. When carrying coins in a briefcase be alert in areas of congestion that may create an opportunity for theft. Examples: Food lines, ticket lines, crowded subways, shuttles, elevators etc.,
64. At the end of the show limit distractions while packing up. Make sure there is adequate security outside when loading. If making several trips to vehicle, have someone watch your table and leave most valuable load for last.
65. Before driving off check your vehicle for any possible tampering (low tires, leaking fluids etc.,)
66. Be cognizant of any suspicious persons or vehicles.

67. Do not be complacent always be alert to your surroundings – “Do Not Be a Victim..... “

Numismatic Crime Information Center is a **501 (c)(3) non-profit corporation** whose mission is to serve as a national and international resource for collectors, dealers and law enforcement in the education, prevention and investigation of crimes involving coins, paper money, tokens, medals and related numismatic items. Visit: WWW.Numismaticcrimes.org and sign up **for free e-mail crime alerts.**
FACEBOOK: <https://www.facebook.com/NumismaticCrimeInfo>