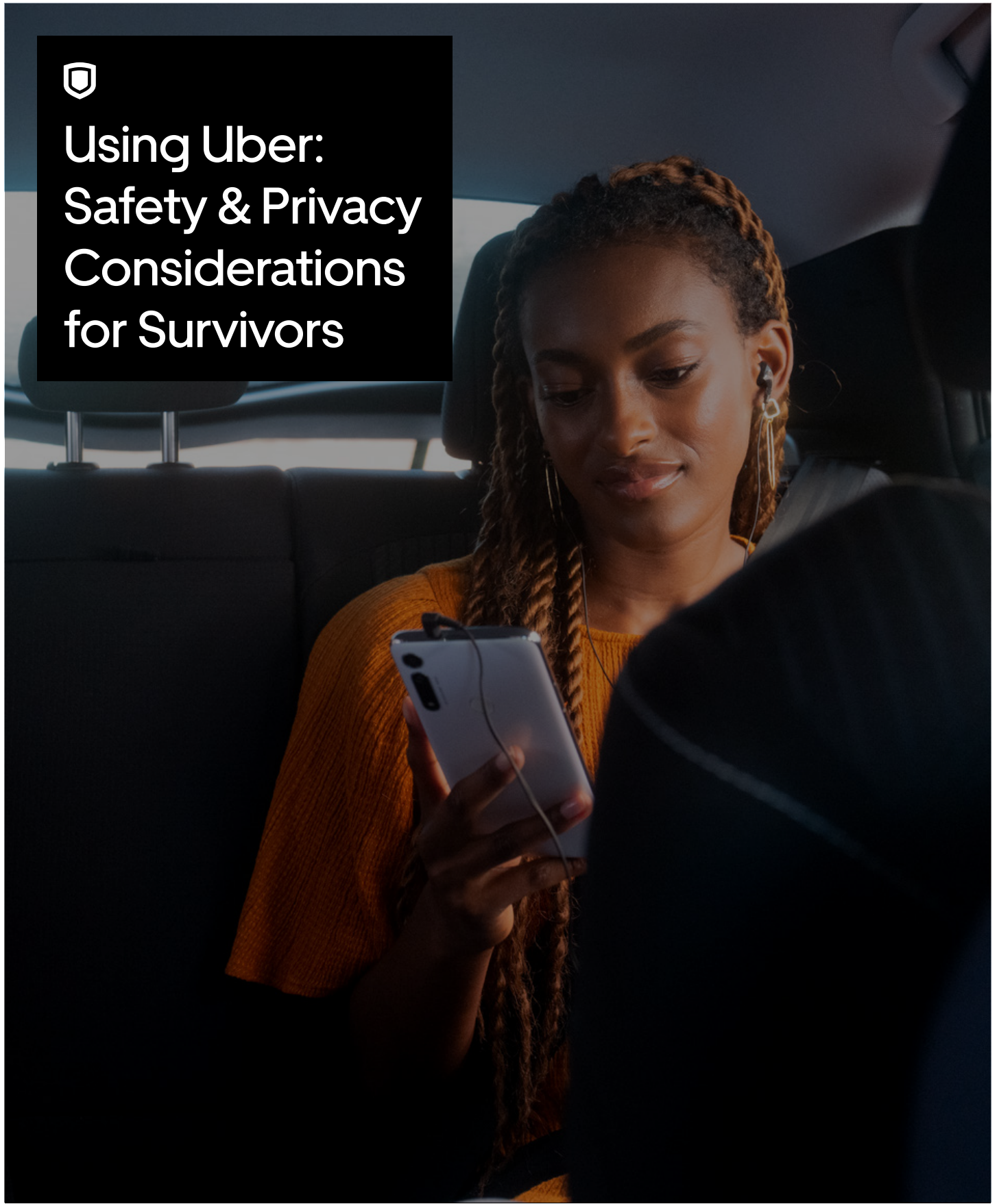




Using Uber: Safety & Privacy Considerations for Survivors



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Uber

Introduction

Ridesharing apps can be a valuable resource for convenient and accessible transport. As with any technology, survivors of abuse often have privacy and safety concerns to consider when deciding if to use these apps.

This resource focuses specifically on Uber's ridesharing app and gives tips and considerations for survivors of abuse or anyone who would like to learn more about their safety and privacy when using Uber.

Before Downloading the Uber App



Because this is an app that will live on your phone and be connected to other accounts, consider whether the abusive person has access to your phone or these other accounts in a way that would allow them to monitor your activity and know where you are going or where you have been. If you believe the person could be monitoring your phone (either physically or remotely), consider if it is a safety risk for you to use this as a means of transportation for places you don't want the abusive person to know about.

Considerations

- **Could the abuser have physical access to your phone and see what is on it?**
 - "Physical access" means being able to pick-up your phone and unlock it, able to pick-up your phone while it is unlocked, or able to get you to unlock your phone and hand it over.
- **Could the abuser have access to important accounts related to your phone or mobile phone service?**
 - Accounts like your Apple ID (for iPhones) or Google Account (for Android)
 - Other apps or accounts that may track and/or share your location information.

If you think the abuser could have access to any of these, and you need to travel to places that you don't want the abuser to know about, you can contact an advocate to discuss ways you can secure your phone, prevent your phone or accounts from being accessed, and other transportation options that don't involve your phone at all.



Creating an Account

Creating an Uber account requires certain personal information, like your name and email address. If you are trying to increase or maintain your privacy from an abusive person, consider what accounts the person may have access to that will be connected to the app. Make sure you are not reusing passwords, as this increases the risk that someone other than you can access multiple accounts and services with just one username and password.

Your email address

- To create an account, you will need an email address where you will receive receipts and some notifications from Uber as well as prompts to reset your password.
- If you create an account using your email address, Uber will send emails, including trip receipts, to that email address.
- If an abuser has access to your email account, they may be able to access your Uber account and see your travel history.

Your payment method

- If an abuser has access to any of your payment methods (checking, credit cards, or payment apps like PayPal or Venmo), either online or by paper copies received in the mail, they may see Uber listed as a transaction. Though they will not see specifically where you were picked up or dropped off, a transaction record can reveal to an abuser that you used Uber to travel, and this may prompt them to ask about where you have traveled to or why.
- You can use a gift card or pre-paid card to pay for Uber rides, though you may be required to verify your identity (take a picture of your photo ID) if you use those to create your account. A gift or pre-paid card may not have a separate transaction record to look at, but the Uber app will still send you receipts and notifications by email.

Linked accounts

- You can create an Uber account using a Facebook or Google account, which links your Uber account to those accounts. If the abusive person has access to your Facebook or Google account, they may have access to other accounts they are linked to. Consider not linking accounts if this could be a concern.



Other Things to Consider Before Use

- The Uber app will keep a history of all your rides, and you cannot remove a ride or transaction from that history. Uber will also send ride notifications and receipts to the email you used to set up your account. If an abuser has access to your phone or your accounts, it might be safer to use another transportation option for any trips that you don't want the abuser to know about.
- The Uber app will send notifications to your phone from time to time. If you are concerned that an abuser may see notifications pop-up on your phone's screen, consider turning off Uber notifications in your phone settings.
- If Uber is your primary way of traveling, consider having backup phone numbers of friends or traditional taxi companies saved for alternative travel options in case you are in an area where the Uber app cannot access data or use a Wi-Fi network. Sometimes you can still use your mobile phone for voice calls when you can't access data.



Safety During Trips

If you are concerned about your privacy or safety, Uber has some built-in features that may be helpful. Below are some considerations and tips. You can also visit [Uber Safety](#) for more information about these and other safety features.

Driver Information

Once you have scheduled a ride, you will be matched with a driver and automatically receive a message with the first name of the driver, description of the vehicle (color, make and model), vehicle license plate, and real time updates on vehicle location. You can use this information to help ensure you are getting in the right vehicle.

- In rural areas with smaller populations, consider whether the abusive person may know a driver with Uber. Since you'll see who your driver is before you are picked-up, you have an opportunity to identify if it is someone the abuser may know and quickly cancel the ride.
- Uber screens drivers to approve who can become a driver, and annually rescreens drivers to determine who can continue to be a driver with Uber. Learn more about [driver screening](#).

Rider Information

- As a safety precaution, Uber hides your real phone number as well as the driver's real phone number, even if you call each other through the app while the driver is en route. A temporary phone number is assigned to each of you, however your first name and the driver's first name will appear if you send messages to each other. If the rider or the driver saves this number and tries to use it later, the call won't connect.
- After your trip is complete, Uber removes specific address information from the driver's app, only leaving the street name (e.g. Main Street). Uber also never shows the driver your last name, phone number, or the rating you give them. You can visit your [Privacy Center](#) in the Uber app or on the web to learn more about what your driver can see about you during a trip.
- If you are concerned about the driver knowing your address, you can select an alternate location where you can be picked up by the driver. When you're entering your pick up or drop off location, you can type in two street names (cross streets) as a pick up or drop off destination.

Ride Check

- If the vehicle has stopped for a long period of time, or the driver is using an unexpected route, or possible vehicle crashes, Uber will send you in-app messages and an automated phone call that will ask you to press a button if the ride is going well and another button if there is an issue. These are sent to both the driver and the rider to make sure that everything is O and provides options for requesting help, if needed.

[Share Trip Status with Trusted Contacts](#)

Uber allows you to share your trip status with up to five individuals that you choose. If you choose to share, your contacts will receive a link allowing them to follow your ride from pick up to drop off. They also receive the driver's first name, the make and model of the vehicle, and license plate. Within your settings, you can add Trusted Contacts to more easily share with individuals who you would like to share your trip status with frequently, and you can delete contacts that you no longer wish to share information with. In order to use this feature, you have to give Uber permission to access your contacts within your device settings. Your contacts do not need to have the Uber app downloaded on their device to follow your ride.

[Emergency Help](#)

Uber's emergency assistance feature is available nationwide. Riders and drivers can connect directly with 911 by tapping the shield icon on their app's map screen, and then tapping the "Call 911" button. In some cities in the United States, Uber has partnered with 911 call centers so that key trip information including the car make and model, license plate, and exact GPS location is shared electronically with 911 dispatchers when the in-app feature is used to call 911. Text-to-911 is also available in cities that support text-to-911 technology.

[Live Help from ADT Safety Agent](#)

Riders and drivers can also get help, via phone or text, from a live safety agent from ADT. When a call or text exchange is requested, the agent can monitor an ongoing trip, stay in contact through the duration of the trip, and even reach out to 911 on the user's behalf with key trip details (vehicle's make and model, license plate number, and GPS location). Riders and drivers can connect directly with an ADT Safety Agent by tapping the shield icon on their app's map screen, and then tapping the "Contact Safety Agent" button.

[Verify Your Ride](#)

As an added layer of verification, and to help ensure you are getting into the right car, you can choose to opt in to receive a unique 4-digit PIN before each trip begins. You will need to verbally provide this PIN to the driver before the trip can start. The driver can only start the ride once the correct PIN has been entered in the Driver app. You can choose to use this feature on every trip or just at night. You can turn on "verify your ride" in your account, under settings.

[Uber's 24/7 Safety Line](#)

Riders also have an option to contact a live Uber safety representative if they are feeling unsafe or are concerned about the ride or the driver for any reason. These calls are answered by a team of trained safety agents. To access the Safety Incident Reporting line look under your account icon and then click the Help button, select the trip that you are reporting, and then select "Safety Incident Reporting Line".

[Privacy Center](#)

Uber's Privacy Center explains the information Uber collects about riders and what information drivers have access to about riders.

Reporting Abuse or Safety Concerns



If something happens during or following a ride, you can report the incident to Uber.

Reporting Options

You can report any experiences that seem unsafe, including privacy violations, abusive behavior, or any other safety issue during or after a ride. To see options for reporting, look under your account icon and then click the Help button.

- To see options for reporting **during** a ride, look at the map of the ride's progress, tapping the shield icon, and then tap on "Report Safety Issue."
- To see options for reporting **after** a ride you can tap on the account icon in the Uber app, and then on "Trips." Tap on the trip you are looking for in your trip history, and then tap on "Report Safety Issue."

Survivor Hotline and Fund

- Individuals who report an incident related to sexual assault will be provided with information on Uber's Survivor Resources Hotline and Fund. Developed in partnership with RAINN, this dedicated hotline offers immediate, confidential, and trauma-informed support for survivors reporting critical sexual assault incidents related to the Uber app in the United States. The hotline is staffed by RAINN support specialists who are experienced in working with survivors of sexual violence and can help survivors better understand their options related to short- and long-term support. RAINN specialists will also help facilitate assistance through a fund created by Uber to provide survivors with financial support for resources such as trauma-informed counseling.

Although this resource has outlined safety risks that are specific to rideshare, every form of transportation will have some risk depending on the behavior and tactics of the abusive person. An important part of increasing safety is understanding the potential risks and knowing options for addressing risks when possible. No one should ever be abused, harassed, and stalked. When this is happening, it's important for survivors and victims to feel empowered on ways to potentially increase privacy and safety. Advocates for survivors of abuse can help to think through safety risks and create plans for increasing safety. To talk to someone and find victim service providers near you, see this list of [National Hotlines](#).