



#WHATSMYNAME: Tips for Staying Safe While Using Rideshare Apps

A Note on Language



In this toolkit, we will sometimes use the word woman/women and feminine pronouns for simplicity and to recognize the significant impact technology-facilitated violence has on women and girls. We recognize that TFGBV also impacts trans, non-binary, and Two-Spirit people. We hope that all people impacted by TFGBV will find these documents useful.

Ridesharing is a newer mode of transportation in some communities. Ridesharing companies use a smartphone app to connect drivers with passengers nearby. Ridesharing differs from taxis because rideshare vehicles are generally owned by the driver and blend in with other cars on the street. Most of the time, the only identifier on the vehicle is a sticker or light on the front or rear windshield. Here are some safety tips for women using ridesharing services.

Before Getting in the Car

- Review the safety features of the ridesharing app.
- Check your driver's photo in the app. In most ridesharing apps, when a driver accepts your request, you will see the driver's photo, car model, and license plate number, and you can follow them on a map in real-time as they make their way to pick you up. Match the driver and vehicle information upon arrival.
- Choose to wait inside whenever possible until your driver arrives. If not, wait in a well-lit area where there may be a security camera (e.g. a doorway of an establishment). In most apps, you can see your driver's ETA (estimated time of arrival) on the app; therefore, you can choose to wait inside until your driver arrives.
- Ask the driver to confirm YOUR name to make sure they are your ride before you get into the car. On most ridesharing apps, the driver who accepts your ride request will have some of your information such as name, phone number, and pick-up location. Asking a driver to confirm your name (instead of you telling them your name) will indicate to you that they are the correct person who is supposed to pick you up.
- Before closing the door of the car, check that there is no child safety lock on the door that will prevent you from opening the door and leaving the car if necessary.

While You're in the Car

- Sit in the backseat, preferably on the passenger side so you can see both the driver and the road.
- Keep your phone in your hand or within reach so you can easily access it in case you need assistance.
- Share your trip with a friend or family member. This can be done through most rideshare apps. Some apps allow you to add "trusted contacts" so you can easily share your trip details.
- During your ride, call a contact and verbally tell them (or leave a voicemail) where you are, your destination, and what time you expect to arrive. This will suggest to the driver that someone is looking out for you and/or waiting for you.
- Follow along in a maps app and note any route changes.
- If you feel unsafe, some apps contain a feature that allows you to call 9-1-1 from within the app. They may provide an estimated current location that you can share with authorities.

After Your Trip

- Report uncomfortable, unsafe, inappropriate, harassing behaviour, and/or experiences of violence to the police and the ridesharing company. Reporting your experience of violence promptly will encourage accountability by the ridesharing company.
- If you need support reporting an experience of violence to the police and/or ridesharing company, contact your local anti-violence program. Use sheltersafe.ca to find a program near you.
- You can also give feedback (whether good or bad) about the driver to the ridesharing company on the ridesharing app after your trip or call the contact number in your community.

The #WHATSMYNAME Foundation was established to honour Samantha Josephson and educate the public on the importance of rideshare safety. For more information, <https://www.whatsmyname.org>.

Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence (TFGBV) is part of a continuum of violence that can be both online and in-person. If you or someone you know is experiencing TFGBV, you are not alone. You can use sheltersafe.ca to find a shelter/transition house near you to discuss options and create a [safety plan](#). You don't need to stay in a shelter to access free, confidential services and support.

Adapted from BC Society of Transition Houses' Tech Safety project, based on their resource [#WHATSMYNAME : Tips for Staying Safe While Using Rideshare Apps](#).

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