

# Understanding Stalking: Types and Steps to Protect Yourself

Stalking is a serious and unsettling behavior that involves persistent and unwanted attention toward an individual. It can lead to fear, anxiety, and disruption in the victim's life. Recognizing the different forms of stalking and knowing how to respond if you find yourself being stalked is crucial for your safety and well-being.

## Forms of Stalking:

**Cyberstalking:** This involves the use of electronic communication platforms to harass, threaten, or intimidate an individual. It can include constant messaging, posting derogatory comments, or spreading false information online.

**Physical Stalking:** In this form, the stalker follows the victim, appears unexpectedly at their workplace or home, and monitors their daily activities without their consent.

**Psychological Stalking:** This type aims to instill fear and emotional distress in the victim. It includes sending threatening letters, making silent phone calls, or leaving disturbing messages.

**Technological Stalking:** Stalkers may use GPS trackers, spyware, or hidden cameras to monitor the victim's movements, conversations, and private moments.

**Erotomania:** A stalker with erotomania holds a delusional belief that the victim is in love with them, even if there is no real relationship.



7.5 million  
PEOPLE are  
**STALKED**  
each year

## Steps to Take If You're Stalked:

- 1. Trust Your Instincts:** If you feel you are being stalked, take your instincts seriously. Your feelings of discomfort and fear are valid.
- 2. Document Everything:** Keep a detailed record of all stalking incidents, including dates, times, locations, and descriptions of the stalker's actions. Preserve messages, emails, voicemails, and any other evidence.
- 3. Inform Trusted Individuals:** Share your situation with close friends, family, and colleagues. Informing others can provide you with emotional support and witnesses if needed.
- 4. Contact Law Enforcement:** If you believe you are in immediate danger, call the emergency services. Otherwise, report the stalking incidents to your local police. Provide them with the evidence you've gathered.
- 5. Secure Your Online Presence:** Adjust your social media and online privacy settings to restrict access to personal information. Block the stalker and avoid engaging with them online.
- 6. Obtain a Restraining Order:** Consult legal counsel to explore obtaining a restraining or protective order against the stalker. This legal document can help keep the stalker away from you.
- 7. Change Your Routine:** Alter your daily routines, such as routes to work or regular hangout spots, to minimize opportunities for the stalker to track you.
- 8. Seek Professional Help:** Reach out to a mental health professional to cope with the emotional toll of being stalked. Counseling can provide you with strategies to manage stress and anxiety.
- 9. Network Support:** Join support groups or online communities for stalking survivors. Connecting with others who have faced similar situations can offer valuable insights and encouragement.

Remember, your safety is the top priority. If you ever feel threatened, do not hesitate to seek help from law enforcement, legal experts, or mental health professionals. Stalking is a serious offense, and you have the right to protect yourself and your well-being.