



Celebrating with heart and mind

Our Carnival motto stands for open, tolerant, happy people whose hearts are in the right place. As the former capital and an international city, Bonn has brought people from all nations together - and that's how we want things to stay during the carnival season: Celebrating with heart and mind. We are your police, and will accompany you on the streets and public transport network. We'll give you hints and tips in several languages, and are there for you every day. For emergencies, dial 110.

Carnival is a tradition. Carnival is about fun and enjoyment. Carnival means respecting people

People get dressed up, take on different roles, and make jokes about politicians, prominent personalities or bosses. It's an expression of joie de vivre, not disparagement. People celebrate at home, on the street or at pubs & restaurants. That's why everywhere will be very full on those days, and not everyone will be able to get a spot whenever they want. Full means full – pub/restaurant managers have the power to enforce house rules, and also see to your safety by controlling the number of people they allow in.

Kissing means friendship. Touching is not allowed. No means no

People dress up in bright, cheery costumes and take on a different persona. Men, women, friends and strangers all sing together, link arms and sway together, and dance together. This is normal on these days, and requires trust. It has no deeper meaning, and is not an invitation to get physically closer. NO means NO, and that must be respected.

Watching allowed. Photographing maybe. Touching taboo

Carnival is a festival bringing people together. It's important to remain polite, respect others, and never use force. If someone doesn't like something, it must be respected – NO means NO. Also be aware when taking photos: Not everyone wants this; make sure you ask for their consent beforehand.

To ensure you don't get a nasty surprise

Swaying to music, dancing, laughing. But: What's mine remains mine

Carnival is a particularly difficult time to tell whether you're linking arms and swaying to music together as per the customs or whether a pickpocket is "waltzing" in. Visibly tipsy or drunk people are a prime target for thieves. So keep money and valuables as close to your body as possible, ideally in sealed pockets on your clothing – and if in doubt, keep your distance when swaying with linked arms.

De Zoch kütt – a good time for burglars

In village areas in particular, participating in the “Zoch” is a must. Burglars know that too, and take advantage of residents’ absence. Protect your property by properly securing your home and apartment. Our crime prevention experts will be glad to advise you. And ask the neighbours who are staying in to keep a watchful eye on your home too.

Join in and have a drink. But: Keep your eyes open and pockets & bags closed. Pickpockets are always around

Whenever there is a crowd of people, there are always going to be pickpockets. They take advantage of the crush, and even seek out physical contact, to quickly grab your wallet or mobile phone. Beware! Carry your valuables in the inside pockets of your clothing or in sealed handbags, bum bags and money belts. Remain wary when strangers crowd around you in an overly chummy manner. It’s not being unfriendly; it’s common sense. Don’t give pickpockets any opportunity. Show them that “what’s mine remains mine”.

Drink spiking – what doesn’t belong in your glass

Remain alert even in relaxed environments. Only sealed bottles you have opened yourself and have kept in constant view can be guaranteed not to have been spiked by someone. But beware: It’s not chemicals, but rather excessive alcohol consumption that is the most common ingredient in sexual assaults. Know your consumption limit. Friends must watch out for one another. Be aware of any disorientated women being pursued by men. If in doubt, dial 110.

Hangover-free Carnival

Revellers sing. Revellers dance. Revellers look out for one another

Many people drink alcohol during Carnival time; some more than their mind and body can handle. Anyone drinking alcohol loses control of themselves faster, their reflexes and reactions are slower, and they are more susceptible to risks. That's why we don't leave our fellow revellers alone, and also help others.

No alcohol for children or minors

Many young people consider alcohol to be a fun factor. Even small quantities have a stimulative, mood-lifting effect; inhibitions and fears are reduced, and the willingness to communicate and make contact appears to be greater. Increased consumption often sees the lifted mood change into aggression and violence, and can lead to serious intoxication, loss of consciousness and disorientation. So: No alcoholic drinks allowed for minors.

“Just one more” is always one too many

Alcohol is socially accepted as a stimulant, and is omnipresent in everyday life. But very few people know their personal limit – and at some point then the party's over. “Just one more” is always one too many. Head out together – watch out for one another – return home together.

Join in and have a drink – but not before driving

Even small quantities of alcohol can dull the senses and affect perception and reactions. Even if you think you're still able to drive, please leave your car where it is and use public transport. The transport companies put on lots of extra bus and train services, and will once again be offering the popular and low-cost 6-day Carnival ticket. Also be sure to prevent friends from driving drunk.

Showing moral courage

Helping without putting yourself at risk

Lots of people are out and about during Carnival time. Not all are friendly; some have drunk more than they can handle, some have got crushed in the crowd or been otherwise injured. Whether it be an act of violence, an accident or other emergency, here are five tips you can use to help without putting yourself at risk:

- I actively and directly ask others to help out.
- I arrange help by dialling 110.
- I attend to victims.
- I observe things thoroughly and memorise the perpetrator's features.
- I make myself available as a witness.

For emergencies, dial 110

Every woman is able and allowed to defend herself

In the case of sexual assaults, women can force perpetrators to stop by bravely defending themselves. If the situation requires, they may engage in appropriate physical violence towards the attacker, in some cases and within reason even punching him/her in the face or kicking his/her shins. We are sceptical of using active self-defence aids (e.g. pepper sprays). They usually require intensive training before use, are often not readily available, and, more importantly, can be taken off you and turned against you.

Not with me! – Body language, facial expressions, gestures and voice

If you are being verbally harassed or physically hassled, let others know by shouting. Address the attacker in a formal manner to avoid giving the impression of it being a domestic dispute. A strong stance and clear language will give you self-confidence. Look the perpetrator in the eye. Outstretched arms with repellent, open palms and short, clear instructions ("STOP" words) will keep the perpetrator at a

distance. Try and seek out other people and actively ask them for help, for example: “You with the red shirt, call the police!”. If need be, seek refuge in shops.

Safety tips for young people

- Plan your journey to and from, discuss things with your friends beforehand. Stay together, never leave anyone behind on their own. Board via the front section of public transport to ensure the driver can provide help if necessary.
- Follow your gut instinct. Avoid confrontations, and try to immediately get out of any precarious situations. Or get help early. Talk directly to the people nearby, and tell them what help you need. For example: “You in the red jacket, call the police!”. You can also seek refuge in shops, petrol stations or pubs/restaurants.
- If you’re being verbally harassed or physically hassled, let others know by shouting. Use short phrases and always speak in a formal manner, so that outsiders will see you don’t know the attacker and will come to your aid.
- Avoid carrying pepper spray or illegal weapons on you, as these can quickly be stolen off you and used against you. Outsiders can’t tell who is the perpetrator and who is the victim. It is wiser to have a shrill alarm, e.g. a small key ring with a shrill, loud whistle which can be used to attract attention and irritate your attacker. This buys you time to escape the situation.
- Dial the emergency police number 110, including if you notice your fellow revellers or others in a dangerous situation.