

Keep your home **SAFE** from Intruders

HOME BURGLARY

By far, the most common threat to our home is burglary. According to the FBI, a burglary occurs somewhere in the United States every 15.4 seconds. The majority of home and apartment burglaries occur during the daytime when most people are away, with summer months of July and August have the most burglaries, February the fewest. What follows is a list of suggestions to minimize your risk by making your home unattractive to potential burglars.

Doors and Locks

The first step is to harden the target or make your home more difficult to enter. A burglar will bypass your home if it requires too much effort, skill and tools.

- Use a quality, heavy-duty, deadbolt lock with a one-inch throw bolt
- Use a quality, heavy-duty, knob-in-lock set with a dead-latch mechanism
- Use a heavy-duty, four-screw, strike plate with 3-inch screws to penetrate into a wooden door frame
- Use a wide-angle 160° peephole mounted no higher than 58 inches
- Lock your car even when it is in the garage

Sliding-Glass Patio Doors

Sliding glass doors are secured by latches not locks and are vulnerable to being forced open. This can be prevented by:

- Use a secondary blocking device on all sliding glass doors
- Keep the latch mechanism in good condition and properly adjusted
- Keep sliding door rollers in good condition and properly adjusted
- Use anti-lift devices such as through-the-door pins or upper track screws
- Use highly visible alarm decals, beware of dog decals or block watch decal

Windows

Windows are left unlocked and open at a much higher rate than doors. A visible open window may be the sole reason for your home to be targeted.

- Secure all accessible windows with secondary blocking devices
- For ground-accessible windows, block them so they open up no more than 6 inches for safety
- Make sure someone cannot reach through an open window and unlock the door or reach inside and remove the blocking device
- Use anti-lift devices to prevent window from being lifted out
- Use crime prevention or alarm decals on ground accessible windows

Be a Good Neighbor

Get to know your neighbors on each side of your home and the three directly across the street and agree upon a mutual plan to assist each other when gone. This neighborhood watch technique sets up what is called territoriality which means that your neighbors will take ownership and responsibility for what occurs in your mini-neighborhood.

- Get to know all your adjacent neighbors & invite them into your home and establish trust
- Agree to watch out for each other's home & do small tasks for each other to improve territoriality
- While on vacation ask a neighbor to pick up your newspapers, and occasionally park their car in your driveway, to make house look occupied
- Provide them with a key to periodically check inside your home (do NOT leave one outside)

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Lighting

Interior & exterior lighting is necessary to show signs of life and activity at your residence at night. Light timers are inexpensive and should be used on a daily basis, not just when you're away. Good lighting is definitely a deterrent to criminals because they don't want to be seen or identified.

- Use interior light timers to establish a pattern of occupancy
- Exterior lighting should allow 100 feet of visibility
- Use good lighting along the pathway and at your door
- Use light timers or photo-cells to turn on/off lights automatically
- Use infra-red motion sensor lights on the rear of single family homes

Alarm Systems

Alarm systems definitely have a place in a home security plan and are effective, if used properly. Alarm systems deter burglaries because they increase the potential (and fear) of being caught by the police.

- Alarm systems are effective deterrents with visible signage
- Alarm systems to be properly installed, programmed, and maintained
- Alarm systems need to have an audible horn or bell to be effective
- Make sure your alarm response call list is up to date
- Instruct your neighbor how to respond to an alarm bell

Home Safes

A safe in your home is a wise investment and are designed to keep the smash and grab burglar, nosy kids, dishonest babysitter or housekeeper from gaining access to important documents and personal property. Home safes need to be anchored into the floor or permanent shelving.

- Use the safe everyday so it becomes routine
- Protect the safe code and change it occasionally
- Install it away from the master bedroom or closet

Operation Identification

This is a program supported by most police agencies. This is very important for proof when filing insurance claims. Keep receipts of the larger items in case you need to prove the value of the items for insurance purposes. You will be thankful that you took these steps in case your home is ever destroyed by fire or flood, is ransacked, or if your wallet is lost or stolen.

- Identify your valuables by engraving your drivers' license number
- Photograph and record the serial numbers of all valuables
- Photocopy the contents of your wallet and other documents
- Store the copies in a safe deposit box or with a relative



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