



Invest in Your Safety NOW!

Home
Security



LOCKS

Nearly half of all successful burglaries are made possible by thieves entering through unlocked doors and windows. Don't give them a chance! Here are some important tips to remember:

- Every external door should have a sturdy, well-installed dead bolt lock. Key locks in doorknobs are not secure enough by themselves.
- Sliding glass doors should be properly secured with extra commercially installed locks, or by putting a broomstick or dowel inside the track to jam the door. You can also insert a pin through the door frame and fixed frame by drilling a hole in it.
- Double-hung windows can be secured with a key lock or by the "pin" method. Drill a small hole into a 45° angle between the inner and outer frame. Now a nail can be inserted and removed when not needed.
- Never hide keys around the outside of your home. Give your extra key to a trusted neighbor or family member.
- Always rekey your locks whenever you move into a new home or apartment.



DOORS

A good, secure lock on a flimsy, old door is about the same as having no lock at all. Consider these points when thinking about home security.

- Use metal or quality, solid wood exterior doors.
- Doors should fit snugly in their frames. Install weather stripping around them to avoid any gaps.
- A peephole or wide-angle viewer is a must for all doors. It is preferable to be able to see who is outside before opening your door. Door chains are easily broken and won't keep intruders out.

Did you know that if it takes longer than 60 seconds to break into a home, a burglar will usually give up and move on. It pays to have quality locks and good neighbors who will watch out for one another!

ALARM

A security alarm can be a good investment when you have many valuable items in your home, or if you live in an isolated area where emergency help can take longer to get to you.

- Shop several different companies to see what they offer and what your particular needs may be. Always check references before signing any contracts and be sure to deal with an established company.
- Learn to operate your alarm system correctly. Setting off repeated false alarms could cause you to be fined and may also jeopardize your authenticity when experiencing a real emergency.
- There are other less expensive options than a security alarm. You can try a sound-detecting socket which plugs into a light fixture and flashes when it detects certain noise, or a motion sensing outdoor light that turns on when someone approaches. There are also lights with photo cells that light up when it's dark and go off when it gets light out.



BURGLARS DON'T JUST STEAL

Burglars can be forced into committing other criminal acts besides stealing. If they are surprised by someone coming in or if they pick a home that is occupied, they may become dangerous rapists or attackers.

- If things look or feel questionable like a broken window or an open door—don't go in. Immediately call the police from a safe place like a neighbor's house.
- If you happen to be home during a break in, leave as safely and quickly as possible and then go call the police. If you can't get out, lock yourself in a room with a phone and call the police. If the intruder gets into your room, pretend to be asleep—do not confront them!
- If you own a gun, be sure you know how to use it and have it stored properly. More guns are responsible for accidental deaths in the home every year.



When bringing your car in for repair, never leave your house keys on the ring. Service people have access to your home address and phone and this could be an invitation for them to enter your home.

OUTSIDE

Look at your home from the outside and be sure to keep these tips in mind:

- ⊗ Install bright lights outside, preferably motion sensing ones. This will surprise and deter a prowler.
- ⊗ Prune all shrubbery and trees and keep your yard clean. You don't want to make it easier for a thief to hide or get to an upper level window.
- ⊗ Your house number should be clearly displayed so that emergency vehicles can quickly find your home.
- ⊗ If you travel or are away from your home frequently, create the illusion that your home is occupied by having light timers installed. Lights burning at all times can signal an empty house.
- ⊗ Leave your window coverings in normal positions and never let newspapers or mail pile up. The post office will stop your mail if necessary or have a neighbor bring it in.
- ⊗ Keep a list of your valuables like, TV's, stereos, jewelry, computers and list their serial numbers and descriptions. You can also take photos of these items. Ask your local authorities about Operation Identification, where you can have your valuables engraved.



NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH!

Join the Neighborhood Watch group. If there isn't one, then speak with your local law enforcement to get one started.

The recorded message on your answering machine should never say that you are not home. Say, "I'm not available," instead.

Organize community clean-ups with your neighbors and local government. The nicer and cleaner your neighborhood, the less attractive it is to crime.