



CRIME PREVENTION

Tips & Tricks

Burglary Quick Facts:

- Studies show that most burglars attack during the daytime when dense bushes and trees protect them from view, and the building appears unoccupied
- 1/3 of burglars enter from the basement
- 1/3 of burglars force entry through a window or door
- 1/3 of burglars gain access from an unlocked/open door or window

To best protect your home, look at it from a burglar's perspective. What are the vulnerable parts? If you take a few simple and inexpensive steps to make sure your home is not an attractive target, you'll greatly reduce your chances of becoming a victim.

Tips for Inside your Home

The goal of indoor crime proofing is to secure your premises, and to make them appear occupied at all times. Here are a few simple tips:

Secure your premises

- Close blinds and curtains at night so that a burglar can't scope your belongings.
- Lock all doors and windows before leaving.
- Lock windows so that they can't be opened from the outside. If they can't be locked, you can pin them by drilling a hole through both window frames and inserting a bolt or metal pin. The pin must be easily removable for emergency situations.
- Home burglar alarm systems are a great deterrent. Even if you have an alarm system, don't neglect the other security measures available to you. An alarm provides an extra layer of security, but is no replacement for good common sense. Alarm owners should still do what they can to make sure their home is not an attractive target for thieves.
- Make your home look occupied at all times.
- Use timers to maintain normal lighting patterns.
- Leave a radio on when you are away from your home for short periods of time.

Protect your valuables

- Consider marking your valuables indelibly (engraved) with your drivers licence or social insurance number.
- Take an inventory of your home with a videotape and/or photographs.
- Keep jewelry and negotiables in a safety deposit box or an unlikely place (i.e. Not your bedroom).



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Tips for Outside Your Home

There are many things that you can do to the exterior of your house or in the yard to deter burglars and make it more difficult to force entry.

- Keep your shrubbery cut back so that it doesn't block windows and doors.
- Secure window air conditioners from the inside.
- Illuminate as much of your property as possible.
- Exterior doors should be solid, not hollow. Metal doors provide the best protection against forced entry.
- Use a fencing style that would not conceal a burglar's activities. Remember if you can't see out, others can't see in.
- Secure any glass that is less than 40' from a door lock. Either coat exterior glass with an acrylic or polycarbonate to strengthen, or replace with laminated or tempered glass.
- Door hinges that are on the outside should have a non-removable center pin that can't be tampered with.
- Install dead bolt locks.
- Dogs are great deterrents to burglars. Even a strategically placed "Beware of Dog" sticker can make a burglar think twice. Of course, vicious dogs are never a good idea. If your dog bites someone, you might find yourself in court. A dog that barks is better than one that bites.
- Place hinged security bars over basement windows. Remember to keep the key nearby for emergency exits.
- Pin sliding patio doors together when closed. Another easy security step is to drill a hole in the upper track and insert a screw that extends out into the runner to prevent the door from being lifted up and out of its track.
- Ensure that a burglar cannot access the roof from high trees or a ladder left outside.

What NOT to Do

- Don't put up a nameplate outside of your house with your full name. A burglar can use this information to look up your number in the phone book and call to see if you are home.
- Don't leave a note on the door or in the mailbox telling a friend/family member that you aren't home.
- Don't leave spare keys in an obvious place such as the mailbox or under the front door mat. This makes it very easy for a burglar to rob your house quickly without forcing entry.
- Don't leave cash and handbags in view in your home.
- Don't leave any doors unlocked when you are at the other end of the house or in the yard.



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Going on Vacation

If you are going on vacation it is especially important to make your home appear inhabited. To fully protect your home you will need to enlist the help of trusted neighbours, family and friends. Here are some things that you can do:

- Stop all mail delivery.
- Arrange for a neighbour to cut the grass or shovel snow.
- Cancel all deliveries during the time you will be away.
- Maintain normal lighting patterns by using electronic timers.
- Ask a neighbour to put one of their garbage bags in front of your house on collection day.
- Leave a radio on, with a timer if necessary to simulate normal use.
- Ask a neighbour to park in your driveway.
- Arrange for neighbours to pick up flyers.
- Don't talk about your vacation plans with strangers or service people.
- Use your work address on your luggage tags so a potential burglar won't know where your empty house is.
- If practical, remove valuables from your home. Small valuables should be stored in a safety deposit box.
- Lock garage door.

Note: Before you leave, you should tell someone you trust:

- That you will be away
- How long you will be absent
- Whether or not you will have a house sitter
- The number where you can be reached

What to Do if Your House is Broken Into

Despite your best efforts, a burglar may still penetrate your home. If you return to find that your house has been robbed:

- Don't stay - Always think of your safety first
- Never confront a burglar or block the exit route
- Go immediately to a neighbour's home or nearby location and phone the police