



HOME SECURITY PREVENTIVE MEASURES



DON'T “WELCOME” A BURGLAR INTO YOUR HOME!! Protect your home by starting where the burglar starts – outside.

Most residential burglars devote little time, if any, to the advanced planning of any specific break-in. Their crimes are, for the most part, crimes of opportunity. They pick what appears to be an easy target. If their planning, surveillance, and closer examination reveal a greater risk than anticipated, they move on to an easier target. The more you do to keep your home from looking like an easy target, the safer you are. There are many steps that you can take to minimize your loss and improve your chances of recovery if a break-in occurs.

LANDSCAPING

A few alterations to the landscape can be enough to put off intruders. To avoid getting caught, intruders look for property they can get in and out of quickly. Their ideal target is a house surrounded by large hedges and shrubs, which hamper visibility from the street and neighbors' houses.

Trim shrubbery and trees so doors and windows are visible to neighbors and from the street. Trimmed landscaping should not provide concealment for criminals. If you have a second floor, prune trees so they cannot help a thief climb in second floor windows. Place trellises where they will not be used as ladders to gain upper floor entry.

Place large gravel on the ground near windows. The noise caused by intruders walking on it can become a psychological deterrent. DO NOT place river rocks or other large items near glass windows or doors - you do not want to provide the burglar with his tools!

Try planting spiny (thorny) plants along fences and under windows such plants will discourage even the most nimble intruder. Protecting with spiny plants is as effective as the use of barbed wire, and a lot more attractive.

LIGHTING

Criminals avoid the spotlight!! Exterior lights are important, especially near doors and in the rear of the house, where intruders do most of their work. All sides of your home should be protected by security lighting. Lighting in carports and garages is critical and can be turned on by motion detectors as you return home, making it much safer for you to leave your car to enter your home.

Outside lighting should be located high and out of reach. Decorative lighting can be useful as well as add to the attractiveness of your home.

Inexpensive timers and electric photo cells will automatically turn lights on and off at the correct time. Motion detectors not only turn on the lights but can also alert you to possible problems and will often scare off intruders.

YOUR HOUSE NUMBER OR ADDRESS

Make sure law enforcement and fire agencies can locate your home in an emergency. Your house number must be clearly visible from the street - day and night.

Use numbers made of reflective materials, or black on white paint, that are 6 inches high. Keep numbers new and clean and replace when necessary. Such numbers should be placed under a light and near the front or garage entrances. Follow the same guidelines for the outside of the rear fence near the back gate so police and fire officials can identify your home from the alley or back street.

Have your house number painted on the curb in front of your house, in the driveway entrance or in a location which cannot be obscured by a parked vehicle.

DOORS

Entry doors should be solid core wood (at least 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ " thick) or metal. Your door should fit its frame tightly, with no more than 1/8" clearance between the door and the frame. If the gap is too big, replace the door or bolt a sturdy metal strip to the door edge. This boosts your protection and saves energy too.

Most hollow core doors can be easily broken through. If the door is flimsy, weak, or does not fit securely into the frame it offers little protection, no matter what locks you use.

Doors with decorative glass panels or windows are easy marks. It takes only seconds to break the glass and unlock the door. If you do not want to replace such doors, install a break-resistant plastic panel or decorative grille over the glass. Attach the grille with special non-removable screws.

Garage doors should be securely locked at all times. Keeping it locked is just as important as keeping your home locked, especially if the garage is attached to the home. Once inside the garage a burglar can work uninterrupted at getting into the house.

Garage windows should be locked and reinforced with mesh screening. They should be covered with shades or blinds so a burglar cannot look inside for possible loot or for an indication of someone being home.

If you install a “dog door” be sure it can not also be used for a burglar to make entry.

LOCKS/DEADBOLTS

The “lock-in-knob” offers you privacy and convenience but it does not offer security from intruders. In fact, many “lock-in-knob” locks can be opened by using a simple credit card. You may have privacy, but you not security.

ALL exterior doors require the use of a deadbolt lock. When you turn the key the locking mechanism slides a strong metal bolt from the door into the door’s frame. When you buy a deadbolt lock, MAKE SURE:

- The bolt extends at least 1” from the edge of the door.
- The strike plate is attached to the door frame with screws at least 3” long.
- It has a rotating case hardened shroud that prevents it from being twisted off with a pair of pliers or other tools.

The two most common types of deadbolts are the single cylinder and the double cylinder:

Single Cylinder Deadbolts have a thumb turn on the interior side. They are convenient to use and may speed up the exit process in the event of fire. If used near a window they can be opened by breaking the window and reaching through. This type of deadbolt lock does not prevent the burglar from taking your property out through the door.



Double Cylinder Deadbolts utilize keys on both sides. This type of lock should be considered if there is a glass window within 40" of the lock. However, this type of lock does present a potential fire escape hazard. This type of deadbolt lock can delay a burglar who wants to use the door to remove your property from your home.



KEYS AND GARAGE DOOR OPENERS

As many as half of all burglaries take place without forced entry, many times the burglar uses a key. Be sure your keys do not fall into the wrong hands.

- Never carry identification tags on your key ring or holder that identify name or address
- Re-key all locks when you move into a new house or apartment. Know who has keys to your home. Do not give keys to maintenance or delivery people. If you must leave a key behind, leave it with a trusted neighbor. Make sure that each member of your family knows where his or her key is.
- Never hide a key outside. Burglars know all the hiding places.
- Do not hang keys on key hooks within plain view, inside your home.
- Do not leave garage door openers in plain sight such as in a parked and unattended vehicle.

WIDE ANGLE VIEWER (PEEPHOLE)

All the hardware in the world won't protect you if you open the door without checking who's on the other side. **Install a peephole and use it.** Teach your children and their baby-sitters to use the peephole, **and never open the door to strangers!!**

STRIKE PLATE

The strike plate is attached to the door frame with screws. The metal bolt of the deadbolt lock slides into the strike plate to secure the door soundly to the door frame.

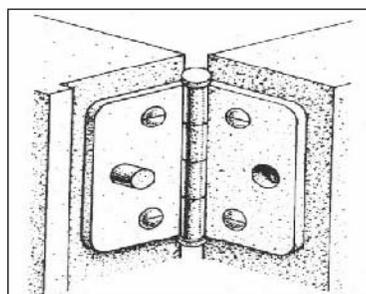
A high security strike plate is required to keep the metal bolt from being kicked from the door frame when locked. A high security strike plate should have at least 4 screws that are a minimum of 3" long.



HINGES

Hinges are often installed with the same $\frac{3}{4}$ " screws as the common strike plates. Replace these with 2" to 3" fully threaded screws so the hinges are anchored to the subframe.

In some cases the hinges are installed in such a manner that the hinges are exposed to the exterior and an intruder may attempt to remove the pins in an effort to gain entry.

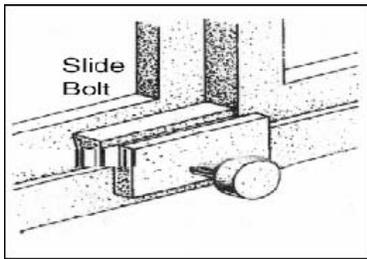


Hinges can be pinned by installing a partially threaded screw into the frame side of the hinge. The unthreaded portion of the screw is left exposed and the head of the screw is cut off. A corresponding hole is drilled into the door and hinge on the opposite side, so when the door is closed the exposed portion of the screw fits into the door. This will prevent the door from being lifted out.

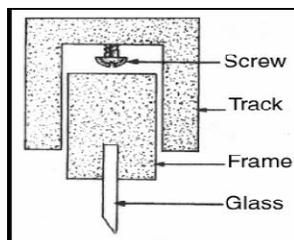
SLIDING DOORS & WINDOWS

People often install sturdy locks on their front doors but leave sliding doors and windows “wide open” to illegal entry. Burglars look for both of these because they are easy to open. Usually, sliding doors and windows are more secluded than a front door, making a perfect place for burglars to enter. Two factors that must be protected against are: **prying the lock and lifting the window out.**

Most sliding doors and windows come equipped with a lock that is easily pried open. A supplemental lock must be installed. Broomsticks, bars and finger operated locks provide some protection.



Key locking devices are much preferred because they can prevent the burglars from using the door or window to remove stolen property. There are several types of supplemental locks available. Keyed locks may be keyed alike with other entry locksets and deadbolts. Check with your locksmith or hardware store and select a sturdy type that most suits your home.

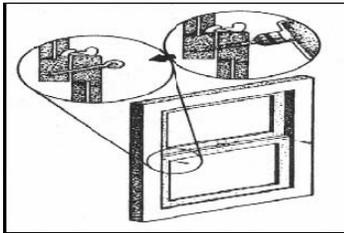


Many sliding doors and windows can be lifted out of their track from the outside. Two sheet metal screws placed in the track above the removable part of the door or window can prevent it from being removed. Adjust the screws so that the door or window will just clear underneath them.

DOUBLE HUNG WINDOWS

To secure a double hung window, drill a downward sloping hole into the top of the bottom window, and through that into the bottom of the top window. A pin can now be inserted locking the window shut. If these windows are not used and no fire exit is needed, they can be screwed shut.

By partly opening the window (less than 4 inches) and making a second set of holes, the window can then be used for ventilation. Remember, it is always best to close and lock windows while you are asleep or the home is unoccupied.



Close blinds and drapes over windows and sliding doors when the home is unoccupied or while you are asleep to not allow a burglar to observe if any activity is present inside.

STREET LIGHTS

If your street light(s) is not working report it to the Public Works Department for the City or Town where you reside.

MAILBOX

Your mailbox should be located so it can be seen and observed by your neighbors. Put only your street address on the box, not your name. Important or sensitive mail and packages should be mailed from the Post Office and not your mailbox.

STORAGE SHEDS

Storage sheds or outside buildings should be securely locked. Any tools or equipment, including ladders, which could help a burglar break into your house, should be locked in the shed or in a locked garage.

FENCES

Fences make it harder for a burglar to carry away large items, but are only effective **if the gates are locked**. Gates should always be locked, even when you are home.

WARNING SIGNS

A sign indicating an alarm system has been installed, that a dangerous dog is present or other warning signs can be a good deterrent. To be effective signs must be of sufficient size to attract attention and be in a conspicuous place.

OPENINGS UNDER THE HOUSE

Any vents leading to a crawl space or basement require reinforcing with metal bars or grills. A burglar can gain access to the house through such openings or a child can be lost in such an area.

ALARM SYSTEMS

Consider the installation of an alarm system which is another effective deterrent coupled with other preventive measures. The system should be monitored by a licensed and UL listed monitoring station. An alarm system can provide you with security, safety, and peace of mind only if you use it every time you leave the house or while asleep at night.

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH PROGRAM

If you are interested in establishing a Neighborhood Watch in your neighborhood, please contact the law enforcement agency in the City or Town where you reside for more information.

REPORT, REPORT, REPORT!

Finally, please report crimes in progress or any suspicious persons or activities immediately to the police. You are the “eyes and ears” in the community as partners in the prevention of crime.

If you have any questions with any of these preventive measures, please contact:

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