

Basic Tips:

- Make your home look occupied, and make it difficult to break in.
 - Lock all outside doors and windows before you leave the house even if it is for a short time, lock your doors.
 - Leave lights on when you go out. If you are going to be away for a length of time, connect some lamps to automatic timers to turn them on in the evening and off during the day.
 - Keep your garage door closed and locked.
 - Don't allow daily deliveries of mail, newspapers or flyers build up while you are away. Arrange with the Post Office to hold your mail, or arrange for a friend or neighbor to take them regularly.
 - Arrange for your lawn to be mowed if you are going away for an extended time.
 - Check your locks on doors and windows and replace them with secure devices as necessary.
 - Pushbutton locks on doorknobs are easy for burglars to open. Install deadbolt locks on all your outside doors.
 - Sliding glass doors are vulnerable. Special locks are available for better security.
 - Other windows may need better locks. Check with a locksmith or hardware store for alternatives.
 - Lawn mowers, barbecues and bicycles are best stored out of sight
 - Always lock your sheds or outbuildings.
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- Use curtains on garage and basement windows.
 - Never leave notes on your door such as "Gone shopping."

Residence Exterior:

- Have adequate exterior lighting. A motion-sensitive light is recommended for backyards.
- Trim trees and shrubs so that they cannot be used as hiding places for intruders.
- Make sure your door hinges are on the inside.

Locks:

- No lock, regardless of its quality, can be truly effective. Ask a locksmith for the best advice on your situation.
- Change locks immediately if your keys are lost or stolen.
- When moving into a new home, have all locks changed.

Alarms:

- An alarm system is excellent for home security. It provides peace of mind to homeowners, especially while on vacation.
- If you have a home alarm system ... **ACTIVATE IT!** Many individuals have alarm systems but do not arm them because it is inconvenient. Many burglars

know this and will not be deterred by a window sticker or sign indicating that the home has an alarm system.

Other precautions you should take:

- Never leave keys under doormats, flowerpots, mailboxes or other “secret” hiding places -- burglars know where to look for hidden keys.
- Keep a detailed inventory of your valuable possessions, including a description of the items, date of purchase and original value, and serial numbers, and keep a copy in a safe place away from your home — this is a good precaution in case of fires or other disasters. Make a photographic or video record of valuable objects, heirlooms and antiques. Your insurance company can provide assistance in making and keeping your inventory.
- Be a good neighbor. If you notice anything suspicious in your neighborhood, call 9-1-1 immediately.
- Mark your valuables. Marked items are harder for a burglar to dispose of and easier for police to recover.

What to do if your home is broken into:

If you come home to find an unexplained open/broken window or door:

- Do not enter - the perpetrator may still be inside (if you enter prior to noticing a problem exit immediately without disturbing any items inside the residence).
- Use a neighbor's phone or a cell phone away from the residence to call the police.
- Do not touch anything or clean up until the police have inspected for evidence.
- Write down the license plate numbers of any suspicious vehicles.
- Note the descriptions of any suspicious persons.
- Advise the police of any items inside or outside of your residence that seem to be out of place, moved or altered