

Preventing Home Burglaries

In many cases of home burglaries, thieves enter the house through a door or window that was left unlocked. The fact is, thieves are “lazy,” and many burglaries can be prevented by using simple strategies to deter them from attempting to enter your home. Keep in mind that there’s more at stake than your possessions — a significant number of violent crimes that occur in the home are committed during household burglaries. Following are some tips on how to protect your home and your family from burglars.

- Lock all doors and windows, including your garage door, when you leave the house and while sleeping.
- Install a dead-bolt and/or a secondary locking system on doors that lead outside. Using a lock that can only be operated from the inside is an extra security measure.
- Remember that patio doors with glass panels can be especially vulnerable. Consider installing double-cylinder locks, where you need a key to unlock both sides, so that a burglar can’t enter your home simply by breaking the glass next to the lock. Also, insert a board at the bottom of the door, to prevent the door from sliding.
- Be suspicious of anyone who asks to enter your home for any type of “maintenance” reason. There are numerous cases of impersonating electricians or gas line inspectors who turn out to be dangerous. Always demand to see an official company ID.
- Install peepholes or wide-angle viewers in your doors.
- Replace burned out light bulbs quickly. Thieves like homes with inadequate lighting. Consider incorporating lighting into your landscaping.

- Keep trees and shrubs around doorways, windows and porches trimmed. The bushes that provide privacy also give burglars a place to hide. Dense shrubs can even make for a makeshift ladder, helping a thief into your home through a window.
- Get involved in a neighborhood watch group. Local police departments can provide you with information on how to establish a watch group in your neighborhood.
- Consider installing an alarm system.

While You’re Away

- Use random access timers that automatically change what time your lights go on and off each night. Lighting patterns that vary appear more natural.
- Ask a neighbor to park his or her car in your driveway.
- Keep expensive items out of view from the yard or the street.
- Have your mail and newspapers picked up by a neighbor or held at the post office.
- Ask your neighbors to call the police if they notice any suspicious activity. Leave a phone number where you can be reached in case of an emergency.



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