

Home Safety

Safety experts agree that the best way to deal with crime in the home is to take every step possible to prevent it from happening to you. Every person should know – at the very least – basic yet important crime prevention tips that will keep you and your family more safe and secure.

As explained in greater detail in this section, law enforcement and security experts will tell you from years of statistics and experience – criminals will almost always look for the easiest possible targets. While no one can be guaranteed 100% that no one will break into your home, these tips will definitely reduce the likelihood significantly.

Read through the tips and advice of experts on how to burglar-proof your home to avoid being the victim of a robbery or theft. The information here about basic crime prevention techniques will be very effective in making your home unappealing to any burglar. For example, by doing a few simple things such as keeping exterior lights on at night, making sure there aren't tall bushes that someone can hide behind, keeping all of your doors locked and installing safety windows, you can turn your house from a target into something a predator will not want to even attempt breaking into. There is also good information about how adding a burglar alarm or even simple home security devices can give you extra security that deter a criminal from choosing you as their next victim.

You can also work with your neighbors to keep each other safe. For instance, a Neighborhood Watch group is a great way to show everyone that they are being watched and will not have an easy time on your block. You can put up signs that indicate you have people watching for suspicious behavior. We recommend that you review the information at <http://www.usaonwatch.org/> or contact your local police department for more information.

What to Do If You Are On Vacation

Many people travel during the holiday season to visit friends and relatives. Criminals are aware of this fact and look for houses that are empty during this time of year. The last thing you want to come home to is a house that has been burglarized, so here are a few things you can do to protect your home.

Make Your House Look Occupied

The best way to keep a burglar away from your home while you are gone is to make it appear that you never left. Start by temporarily stopping the delivery of the daily mail and newspaper. When papers are allowed to pile up on the front porch or mail boxes start to overflow, criminals are alerted that people have gone out of town. Put timers on lights inside the house so they turn on every night. The same can be done for television sets to help give the appearance that people are at home. Once you have things in place to make the house look occupied, remember to do one final thing: turn off the ringer for your phone. All the work you have done to create the illusion that you are home can be shattered by a ringing phone that is never answered.

Ask a friend or relative to stop by your home periodically if you will be gone for several days. This allows them to keep an eye on the place, and will show any criminals who might be

watching that someone is going inside on a regular basis. If no one is able to do this for you, try to leave a parked car in the driveway while you are away to make it seem like someone is at home.

Burglars who think they have found an easy target can break into your home quickly. One way to discourage this is to put up signs or stickers that state you have a working security system in place. The last thing a criminal wants is to set off an alarm, and if they see the signs they will think your home is not worth the effort.

Safety When You Are Home

Just because you don't leave home for the holidays doesn't mean your house is automatically safe. A very common holiday mistake is to make it obvious that you have expensive items still in their boxes within your living room. Of course most people would assume that every home has a variety of gifts inside during the holidays, but if a criminal can actually see them they will be far more tempted to break in. Never place wrapped gifts where they can be seen through a window. Doing so lets a criminal know exactly where everything is, and they may be inclined to break that window, grab what they can and run off.

A second part of keeping your holiday treasures hidden is to avoid putting large empty boxes in front of the house. Even if you store the gifts away from windows, the box itself will tell a burglar that you have something they may want in your home. Keep the boxes hidden until the holidays are over, and then recycle the packaging. By that point, criminals are not as active about looking for goods they may want to steal.

Don't let your holiday season be ruined by a law breaker. Make sure a criminal can never tell that you have expensive items inside, or that you have left town for a few days. Keep safe and enjoy the holiday season.

How to Burglar-Proof Your Windows and Doors

Windows are a very common entry point for burglars. They are often left unlocked or even wide open. When closed and latched, windows can easily be shattered with a rock, brick or any other heavy object. There are several options available to help secure your windows.

Window Add-Ons

Metal bars can be placed over all the windows in your home. This makes it impossible for a burglar to gain access. Even if they are able to break the glass, there is no way to squeeze in through the bars. The drawback is that some people feel the metal bars make their dwelling look more like a prison than a home.

There are also laminated films that can be placed over every window. The films bond with the glass to make them nearly impregnable. In addition, the film is clear so the window will remain completely transparent. A burglar won't even know the glass is protected until they try to break it.

Reinforced Glass

Another option to burglar-proof windows is to use glass that is strong enough to withstand extreme force. Some window panes are even bullet resistant, so a single shot from most guns will not break them. This type of glass may be more than you need and it is very expensive, but there are other choices.

Some glass contains thick wires throughout, making it both decorative and functional. Burglars will know right away that this will not be an easy window to get through. After breaking the glass, the wires will still be in the way, and would need to be cut before entry is possible. Criminals will most likely pass on a window like this because getting through them would be difficult and time consuming.

Glass that is tempered has been placed in a very hot oven and then immediately moved to frigid surroundings. This is done to bring the glass to a melting point, and then freeze it back into a solid piece, which makes it stronger. Tempered glass is far more durable than standard window panes, and very difficult to break. A burglar cannot shatter it with normal tools of the criminal trade, and will tend to give up and move on to an easier target.

Windows do not have to be made from glass. Plexiglass looks like the real thing, but is actually made out of a thick plastic. It is transparent so it gives the illusion of being a regular window, but burglars will find it is impossible to break.

Sliding Windows

Some homes have windows that slide open on a track. Burglars may find it easy to gain access through these windows, so it is essential to secure them. By installing latches, such as those found in a "Casement Window" you can make them very difficult to open. You can also find bolts and locking pins for sliding windows, but burglars are often able to pry them open if they are determined to get in.

Ensuring your windows are burglar-proof is an essential task for every home owner, but it is important to remember that you may need to use the windows as an escape route during a fire or other emergency. Make sure you have the ability to get out through a window if it becomes necessary to do so.

Burglars break into your home when they believe no one is around so they can take your most valuable possessions. They look for houses that appear to be easy to get inside, either through a window or a door. That makes it imperative for every person to make sure their doors are as secure as possible. There are several ways to do this.

Keep Your Door in Plain Sight

A burglar won't care if they break in through the front or back of the house, but if they feel the front door is well hidden it becomes an easy target. A house with overgrown trees and bushes can block the view of the front door, giving criminals a perfect spot to hide behind while they make their way inside. Keep any type of plant life trimmed back so thieves cannot use them as a hiding place.

Check Your Door

Before adding any security devices to your door, examine it to see if it hangs properly and was installed correctly. Make sure there are screws in every hole for each hinge. The more securely a door is attached to the wall, the harder it will be to break down. If the hinges are loose or partially empty, it is important to fix them right away. Create new holes if the wood is rotted out and the screws are barely hanging on. Once the door is on as tightly as possible, you can include new locks and bolts.

Door Locks and Bolts

Some basic door locks are easy to get through. The lock can be pried back with a small instrument, allowing a burglar to open the door and get inside. You can add a Dead Latch door lock quickly and easily to make the entryway far more secure. These locks cannot be pried open, so they are an inexpensive and very effective security device.

A rim lock can be installed on the inside portion of a door in just a few minutes. It includes a heavy duty dead bolt to make sure criminals cannot pry it open.

The top and bottom of any door can be reinforced with flush bolts. These are bolts that make it impossible for a burglar to open the door for easy entrance. When installing any type of bolt, make sure everyone in the house knows how to lock and unlock them quickly. While they work well for keeping intruders out, they can also lock people inside during an emergency situation if everyone does not know how to operate them.

Your front and back doors are common and easy targets for burglars who may try to get inside your home. Don't let them – take precautions to reinforce every door in your house and make sure they do not provide easy access for criminals.