

Things Homeowners Can Do to Make it Harder for a Burglar

- Lock all doors and windows. On the subject of locks, invest in a good lock. Deadbolt locks with long bolts that terminate in a good, solid door frame makes breaking down a door a chore. And, invest in a good, solid core door.
- Keep shrubs trimmed back. If windows are visible, it's easier for neighbors or police to spot a broken window. Also, consider "thorny" shrubs. If it's painful to access a window over shrubs, that's a deterrent.
- Keep your garage door closed at all times. Not only does this prevent items from being stolen, it also takes away another sign that you're home or away.
- If you have a garage, use it to store your vehicles. This makes it harder for crooks to not only determine when you're home and when you're gone, but also helps prevent them from burglarizing your vehicles.
- Get to know your neighbors. A great deterrent to crime. Extra sets of eyes keeping a watch on your property, reporting suspicious activity, and helping keep you safe. Be sure and return the favor and keep an eye on their home, too.
- Consider an alarm system. Most insurance companies offer discounts for alarms, and some systems also monitor for fire.
- Watch what you throw out with the trash. If you've purchased a new TV, computer, or other expensive item, consider another way to dispose of the box. Will the store dispose of the box in their trash for you? Can you cut up the box and place in garbage bags?
- When away for long periods of time, use timers for lights to give the home a lived in look. Leave a radio or TV on at a conversational volume level. Have a neighbor pick up your paper and mail, and accept packages. Have that neighbor remove door hangers and other advertisements that pile up on the front door.
- Consider a safe deposit box for jewelry storage, especially expensive jewelry, or jewelry you don't wear often.
- Join or form a crime watch group. Getting to know a lot of your neighbors, and inviting the police to your meetings, is a powerful tool in your arsenal against crime.
- Turn on exterior lighting after dark. Use the same schedule for lighting when your away that you do when you're home. Consider timers for exterior lights.
- Think like a burglar. Ask yourself, "what would a burglar find when he looks at my house that would be inviting?" Remember that YOU are an important partner in the fight against crime.