

## **Home Safety Tips**

Burglaries are not only one of the most common crimes, but they are also one of the most preventable. Burglars will not target a home if they believe someone is there. That is why burglars prey upon residences that look unoccupied. Police call these "targets of opportunity"--homes virtually signaling themselves as ripe for burglary.

### **Secure Yourself Against Burglars:**

1. Keep all doors and windows closed and securely fastened. An open window or door is an invitation for burglars. Thieves are also quick to spot weak locks that may be easily forced open. Doors should have dead bolt locks with a 1" throw and reinforced strike plate with 3" screws. All windows should have window locks.
2. Secure sliding glass doors. Place a metal rod or piece of plywood in the track and install vertical bolts. These will help prevent burglars from forcing the door open or lifting it off of the track.
3. Always lock the door to an attached garage. Don't rely on your automatic garage door opener for security.
4. Keep the perimeter of your home well lighted. Installing low voltage outdoor lighting is a cost-effective way to discourage intruders, as well as highlight a house.
5. Never leave clues that you are away on a trip. Have a trusted neighbor collect mail and newspapers while you are away so delivered items do not accumulate. You can also ask a neighbor to park in your driveway or parking place to make it appear that you are present.
6. Never leave a message on your telephone answering machine telling people that you are away from your home. A message that you will return at a certain time leaves your home vulnerable in the interim.
7. Use window and door alarms. Alarms vary in degree of sophistication, ranging from a door alarm that makes noise to silent alarms patched into your local police station. Burglars will typically leave when any alarm is sounded. In addition, an inexpensive alarm also creates valuable piece of mind.
8. Take a complete inventory of your valuables and place jewelry and documents in a safety deposit box.
9. Never place keys under the doormat, flower pot or window ledge. Burglars study the daily habits and routines of people. Experience has taught them to check these places first when casing a house.
10. Lock up ladders, tools or lawn furniture. These items could be used by burglars to gain entry into the home.
11. Trim trees and shrubs surrounding the home. If overgrown, these areas serve as perfect hiding places for burglars and allow them to work undetected.
12. Organize a community watch program to protect your neighborhood. An alert community is a safe community.

