

Protecting Your Home From Crime

These crime prevention guidelines will most certainly minimize your risk of becoming a victim of a home burglary.

1. Invest in solid doors and good quality locks on doors and windows. This includes on all sliding glass doors as well. Make it not only difficult but also time consuming for a burglar to gain entry.
2. Whenever you go outside, lock the door(s) and take the key with you, even if you are just stepping next door or out mowing the back yard.
3. Don't put valuables where they can be seen from the window, especially items that can be easily carried.
4. Be sure your garage door can be secured. Do not leave it open when you are away; an empty garage broadcasts your absence.
5. When you aren't home, use a timer set to turn interior lights on and off at varying intervals as though your home was still occupied.
6. Don't keep large amounts of cash or valuable jewelry around the house.
7. If someone comes to your door asking to use the telephone, make the call yourself. Don't invite them in.
8. Don't hide a spare key under the door mat or under a flower pot. Thieves know all the good hiding places.
9. Plant thorny bushes under all windows. Trim back any trees or shrubs near doors and windows to eliminate hiding places for would-be thieves.
10. Invest in a good security system along with motion sensor lights installed out of reach.

11. Don't leave ladders outside. Keep any tools that could be used to break in your home safely locked away in a garage or shed.
12. Get a barking dog or "beware of dog" signs. If you own a dog and go out of town, have someone come and care for your dog in your home.
13. Always double check doors at night and lock all windows.
14. Engrave all valuables such as stereos, microwaves, video cameras, etc., with your driver's license number. Videotape the contents of your home. Keep the video and the list of all valuables in a safe place, such as safely deposit box.
15. Do not list your first name in the telephone book. Instead use initials.
16. Make sure your answering machine message does not indicate that you are alone.
17. Have deadbolts installed on all doors. Keep doors and windows locked.
18. Strive to make your home look as lived-in as possible while you're away. Have driveway plowed in winter and lawn tended in summer have newspapers picked up, keep mailbox checked. This is especially important for vacation home owners.
19. Don't broadcast your plans but do let your neighbors and local law enforcement know if you are going out of town.
20. Give a spare key to your neighbors and give them an emergency telephone number they can use to reach you.