

## HOME SECURITY BURGLARY PREVENTION METHODS

Securing our homes and making our neighborhoods a safer place to live continues to be one of our most important priorities. Your best defense is to create an environment in which burglaries are less likely to occur. This can be accomplished by methods of physical security, the outside appearance of your residence and by neighbor and police cooperation. Burglars tend to avoid neighborhoods that are security conscious. Perform a routine security check on your home. The following paragraphs describe tips and techniques will be useful in safeguarding your residence.

- 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 one inch throw and reinforced strike plate with three inch screws. All windows should have locks. Consider an alarm.
- 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 the track.
- Always lock the door to an attached garage. Don't rely on your automatic garage door opener for security.
- Create the illusion that you are home by using timers on lights, radios and televisions. Making your residence appear occupied even when no one is home will deter criminals.
- 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. Use motion sensitive exterior lighting at doors and garages which will illuminate burglars entering upon your property.
- 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. Never tell a stranger that you will be on a trip or vacation.
- Keep some shades and blinds up and curtains open to maintain a normal, everyday appearance in your residence.
- Never leave a message on your telephone answering machine telling people that you are away from home. A message that you will return at a certain time leaves your home vulnerable in the interim.
- Keep shrubbery trimmed away from entrances and walkways. While large, ornate hedges may be beautiful, they also provide a hiding place for burglars who need only a minute to break in through a window or door.
- Burglars are known to approach homes by ringing doorbells and then pretending to be lost or asking for directions. If anyone approaches your home in this manner, call the police immediately. Try to get a description of the person and any involved vehicle, along with a license plate number if possible to pass on to the police. The police will verify the story and offer any necessary assistance.

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