Household Security Checklist



Check over your house to make sure it is secure. Look at it the way an intruder would and determine where the weak spots are.

Look at your house from the street and the alley:

- Are the entrances and exits visible, discouraging someone from sneaking in unobserved?
- Does it look like there is someone home?
- Can you see valuable items inside?
- Can you see the occupants through the curtains or blinds?

Follow these tips for making your home more secure:

- Exterior doors should be solid without glass. The best locks are of no use if an intruder can break a thin plywood door or glass panel to reach the lock from the inside.
- Install a wide-angle viewer in all exterior doors so you can see visitors outside. Install a second viewer at a lower level if needed for children and family members who use wheelchairs.
- Keep control of your household keys. If you lose a key, change the locks. Don’t leave a key hidden outside; intruders can figure out your hiding place.
- Keep doors locked at all times, even when you are home in the daytime. Keep your garage locked as well.
- Install a switching system so all lights in the house can be turned on at the same time from certain locations such as the bedroom or kitchen. Having all the lights come on could scare away a burglar.
- Maintain good lighting around the outer area of your house. Install timers on exterior lights so they come on at dusk and go off at dawn.
- Keep shrubs cleared away from the house and six inches below windowsills, removing hiding places for intruders.
- If windows must be left open for ventilation, make sure they are secured so they cannot be opened fully from the outside.
- Regularly check on the doors and windows which are used infrequently, to make sure they are secured.
- Your house number should be visible from the street, even at night. This could help police and other emergency responders to find your house quickly.

- Install extension phones in each bedroom. Each extension should be programmed for rapid dialing of emergency numbers. Phones with illuminated keypads are easier to find and use in the dark.
- If you can afford it, have a security service patrol your premises. Have the security company provide you with warning stickers for all doors and accessible windows.
- Install a security system. Shop carefully and gather all the information you can before making a purchase, however. If the system does not function properly or is too complicated, you will end up not using it. Deal with a reputable company which will be around to service your system later.

Deaths have occurred because people were trapped by security devices.

- Make sure your windows open easily and the opening is wide enough so someone can escape.
- If windows have security bars, they must have quick-release components. Teach all members of the household to use them quickly and correctly.

Do not provide temptation for a criminal. Secure your house and make sure everyone who lives there knows how to deal with the security devices.