

# Crime Prevention & Home Security – Things You Can Do

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This article details things you can do to improve your home security (and thus prevent crime) both in terms of your own behavior and changes you can make to your home.

## Homeowner Behaviors:

- Keep your vehicle doors locked.
- Keep your garage doors and windows locked.
- Keep the connecting door (if you have one) between the house and garage locked.
- Do not leave valuables (e.g., electronics, purses, packages) visible in an unattended vehicle – just as you wouldn't do in a shopping area parking lot even though the vehicle was locked.
- Local neighborhood awareness: get to know your nearby neighbors paving the way for them to watch your house when you're away (e.g., vacation) and allowing you to reciprocate.
- Use the locks you already have installed – nearly half of all residential burglaries occur through unlocked doors and windows.
- Keep landscaping near your house trimmed (making it difficult for thieves to hide out). This may include tree limbs that would facilitate a second story entry.
- Leave a spare key with a trusted neighbor in lieu of hiding it on your property.
- While on vacation or away, stop mail and newspaper delivery – or arrange for a neighbor to pick such up daily.
- Leave a radio on with the volume turned low when leaving home, even for short periods.
- Lock up all ladders, ropes or tools that could help a burglar gain entry.
- Avoid displaying valuable items near windows with open drapes or shades.
- Keep your doors locked at all times – as you never know who could walk in and you may not be in the vicinity to see or hear them.
- Ensure your house number ('911' number) is clearly visible from the street allowing responding emergency vehicles to locate your house without delay in the event of an emergency.

## Home Changes:

- Purchase timers for several lights in your home allowing lights to come on at dusk and turn off in late evening.
- Add an electronic (monitored) home security system.
- Add exterior lighting for all house entrances.
- Add/modify exterior lighting to security lighting (motion sensitive lights) – security lights available today can be set to turn on at dusk for a preset number of hours in addition to being sensitive to motion.
- Add deadbolt locks for all exterior doors (an option to electronically secured doors) – one recommendation from the National Crime Prevention Council is Medeco Security Locks.
- Secure sliding glass doors by installing commercially available locks or putting a broomstick or dowel in the inside track to prevent opening.

- Install a peephole in all entry doors allowing you to see who is outside (at the door).
- Keep a dog in your house if you can.

#### Networked Support:

- National Crime Prevention Council: [www.ncpc.org](http://www.ncpc.org) This site deals with more than just home security – e.g., they have a section dealing with identity theft.
- Making your home secure: <http://www.crimedoctor.com/home.htm>
- ***Preventing Burglaries – How to Protect Your Home***: This booklet provides more details on the strategies suggested above. The booklet can be found at the following link at [http://www.hhmesequim.org/Crime Prevention Reporting -- Preventing Burglaries Booklet.pdf](http://www.hhmesequim.org/Crime%20Prevention%20Reporting%20--%20Preventing%20Burglaries%20Booklet.pdf)