



Choose the right locks and doors. Fit all exterior doors with 1-inch-long deadbolts. They're far more effective than chains, which can be ripped off or cut. Key-in-the-knob locks alone are not enough. Spring latch doors can be easily "jimmied" by even the most inexperienced criminal. Solid wood or metal doors are least likely to be kicked down. A lock on a flimsy door is about as effective as locking your car door but leaving the window down. Protect sliding glass doors by installing special commercial locks. You can also put a broomstick or dowel in the inside track to jam the door. To prevent the door from being lifted off the track, the National Crime Prevention Council recommends drilling a hole through the sliding door frame and the fixed frame, and inserting a pin into the hole.

Install a peephole or wide-angle viewer in all entry doors so you can see who is outside without opening the door.

Instead of hiding keys around the outside of your home, give an extra key to a neighbor you trust.

Use the locks all the time. Always lock exterior doors when you're inside, especially if you're upstairs or when you're working in the yard. Re-key all locks when you move into a new home or apartment.

Secure out-buildings, too. If you have a storage shed or backyard gate, install padlocks.

CONSIDER AN ALARM

Alarms can be a good investment, especially if you have many valuables in your home, or live in an isolated area or one with a history of break-ins. Check with several companies before you buy so you can decide what level of security fits your needs. Do business with an established company and check references before signing a contract.

BURGLARS DO MORE THAN STEAL

Burglars can commit rape, robbery, and assault if they are surprised by someone coming home or pick a home that is occupied.

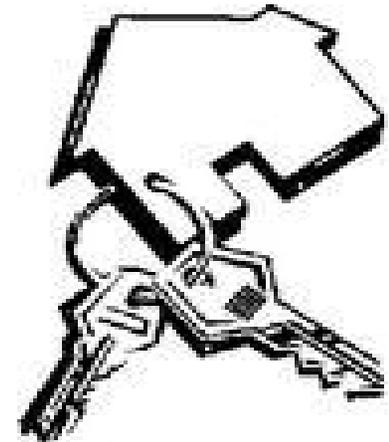
- If something looks questionable – a split screen, a broken window or an open door – don't go in. Call the Suffolk Police Department from a neighbor's house or a public phone.
- At night, if you think you hear someone breaking in, leave safely if you can, then call police. If you can't leave, lock yourself in a room with a phone and call police. If an intruder is in your room, pretend you are asleep.
- Guns are responsible for many accidental deaths in the home every year. If you choose to own a gun, learn how to store and use it safely.



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Closing the Door on Crime: Tips for Protecting Your Home



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INTRODUCTION

If you were locked out of your house, would you still be able to get in? Maybe you keep an unlocked window in the back, or a hidden key in your mailbox or on top of a window ledge?

You may think this is a good idea, but guess what? If you can break in, so can a burglar!

One out of ten homes will be burglarized this year. For a small amount of time and money you can make your home more secure and reduce your chances of being a victim.

THINK LIKE A CROOK AND YOU CAN STOP HIM COLD



Most burglars are going to look for easy targets, as do most criminals with any type of crime. More specifically, they look for homes that are easy to gain entrance, have the least risk of them being seen by neighbors or passing motorists, have inadequate locks and lighting, and have the maximum potential for escape, without being seen, in the event they are detected. A little common sense and some easy, effective and inexpensive crime prevention measures can decrease your chances of becoming a burglary victim.

To thwart a burglar, you've got to think like one! Evaluate the state of your home's security by asking the following questions – the very things prowlers ask themselves. There is no single thing you can do to burglarproof your home, but the more measures you take, the safer you'll be.

IS ANYBODY HOME?

Know when to be especially vigilant. Statistics show that 68% of burglaries take place when residents are away. Most occur in broad daylight, between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. Burglaries go up during the summer vacation season, especially in August, as well as right before Christmas. Sunday mornings and during funerals or weddings are other opportune times for crooks.

Create a sense of activity. Install photoelectric sensors that turn on outside lights automatically when it gets dark. Never leave a message on your answering machine that indicates you'll be away for any length of time.

Take precautions when you're away. If you travel, create the illusion that you're at home by getting some timers that will turn lights on and off in different areas of your house throughout the evening. Lights burning 24 hours a day signal an empty house. Park a car outside your garage to make it look like someone's home, or ask a neighbor to use your driveway. Arrange to have your mail and newspapers taken in, or have deliveries stopped. For long trips, ask a friend or relative to housesit. Keep shades in their usual position. If you usually open them by day and close them at night, leave them closed so would-be thieves can't see inside.

HOW EASY IS IT TO GET IN?



Trim hedges, especially near doors and windows. Cut back tree limbs that a thief could use to climb to an upper-level window.

Most burglars take just 60 seconds to break in. Don't give a thief the opportunity to wait around for the chance to get inside. Keep foliage low. Better yet, plant thorny bushes around doors and windows.

Let there be light. Thieves hate bright lights. Illuminate entrances. Lights should be placed high enough that a burglar can't reach up to unscrew them.

Get a dog. It doesn't necessarily have to be a big dog; any barking one works almost as well as an alarm system.

Join a Neighborhood Watch Program.



If your neighborhood doesn't have a program in place, contact the Suffolk Police Department's Community Services Unit at 514-7861 for information on

establishing a program in your area. Good neighbors who look out for one another are as important as good locks. Studies show that areas with active watch programs do indeed have fewer residential burglaries. Work with neighbors and city government to organize community clean-ups. The cleaner your neighborhood, the less attractive it is to crime.

IS THE HOUSE SECURE?

Be sure to lock doors and windows. The best locks in the world won't work if they're not used. In half of all successful residential burglaries, thieves simply walked through unlocked doors or eased themselves through windows. Don't overlook side doors on garages, or the interior door between the garage and the kitchen.