

## Top 12 Tips for Making Your Home More Secure

### Get an alarm

Burglar alarms are a very effective deterrent. Back in 2011 reformed burglar Leon Reid published a checklist of tips on how to avoid being burgled. Despite breaking into over 70 homes he said he would never go near a home with a burglar alarm box, as the risk was too high.

### If You Have an Alarm System, Use It

Homes without an alarm system are three times more likely to be targeted than homes with one. But, if you have an alarm system and you don't use it, you might as well not have one at all. Professional thieves stake out their targets to watch their comings and goings. Over half of all burglaries committed on residences occur between the hours of 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. If thieves see that you never set your alarm when you leave during the day, they'll make a move.

### Not Just Any Dog Can Be a 'Guard Dog'

In some cases, a barking dog may be all it takes to scare a would-be thief away, because barking draws attention. However, even the loudest, biggest, meanest dog can turn into a whimpering coward when threatened by a stranger, and professional thieves know it. Plus, Reid keeps his pockets full of dog treats, so he can instantly go from stranger to friend. Don't rely solely on your poor pooch to protect your from criminals.

### Secure Even the Smallest Windows

'Nobody can fit through that window !!!!!' Never underestimate the stealth of criminals.

### Set Up Timers for Lights

Have a couple of lights in your home set to switch on with timers when you are out. This way burglars can't be sure the property is empty, which makes them far less likely to risk it.

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## **Don't Give Them a Key**

More than 6,000 burglaries last year did not involve a break-in. Thieves simply used a key that the owner had 'hidden'. Research found that an astonishing 29 per cent of us leave a spare key outside our property somewhere.

Burglars are often also able to reach a key through a window or letterbox, so keep your keys out of sight and in your house.

Also if you lose your house keys, or they are stolen, along with information about your address, get your locks changed.

## **Lay Pebbles or Shingle**

Anything that would make approaching your home noisy and likely to attract attention. For the same reason motion activated lighting is a good idea.

## **Don't Help Them**

Make sure you secure ladders and lock them so burglars can't use them to gain access to your property. For the same reason fit a good lock on your shed or garage so thieves can't break in and use your own tools to get into your house. Also think about garden ornaments, which could be used to break windows. A calendar in the house can give full details of when you will be out, or away. So, having burgled you once, the well-informed burglar could wait until your next holiday and return for seconds. Once burgled your chances of being burgled again increase as many burglars will return, as you will replace the items lost with new ones, which brings the burglar back.

## **Another Way of Helping Them**

Social media is a big problem, people will share details about their address, talk about when they're going on holiday or brag about things they've bought. This type of information is invaluable to a criminal.

Avoid selling your house with an estate agent that shows your address, this is an open invitation for burglars.

Burglars will also assess the accessibility of cars outside the property to see how easily they can be driven away. Only 1% of drivers steer their wheels into the curb when parallel parking as opposed to the 99% who either leave their wheels straight or angled out towards the road. Without realising the 99% that do not steer their wheels in towards the curb, are leaving themselves more open to having the vehicle stolen as it can be easily driven away from the scene.

## What Type of Things are Burglars Looking For?

Laptops, iPads, gadgets, credit cards, jewelry – anything that can be wiped clean and sold on easily. Car theft is also on the increase and opportunists will break into your house just to get your keys which are traditionally left by the front or back door.

## What Advice Would You Give to Homeowners?

The loft is the safest part of the house. Burglars don't want confrontation and will ensure they have an immediate escape route. A safe is also an excellent way to store your valuables but ensure it's secured to the ground or it's too heavy to be carried away. Mark your items with your postcode using a UV Pen, this allows the Police and Traders to identify stolen items. If you're going on holiday, cancel any newspaper or milk deliveries and use the Royal Mail's 'keepsafe' service - they keep your mail for up to 2 months while you're away, mail sitting on your doorstep is a sign that you are away. Trusted neighbours may be able to help you by collecting your post, opening and closing curtains and they could park their car on your driveway.

## A Final Piece of Advice

Imagine if you were locked out – what would you do to get into your property? It's exactly the same process a burglar goes through. If you're not serious about security, that is making a decision to not be safe. Open your eyes to caring a bit more about your home, possessions, and loved ones. Take action before you're a victim and we can beat the burglar!

**[Call Today for a Free Security Survey on 08455 33 00 33](tel:08455330033)**