

HOME BURGLARY PREVENTION TIPS

No home or neighborhood is immune, but these relatively easy precautions, when performed jointly, will deter most home burglars.

Don't leave a "hidden key" outside under doormat, flowerpot, in a drain spout, in your car, over the door, etc.
Don't have your name and address on your keys unless you are willing to replace all locks if you lose your keys.

Don't grow hiding places by allowing windows/side bushes to grow too large.

Don't allow small valuables to be visible from the street or within arm's reach from outside window.

Don't allow strangers in who act as though they're lost, request a drink of water, or want to use the phone.

Don't display your name on your mailbox. A thief needs only a phonebook to determine who answers and who is gone.

Don't leave a ladder outside.

Don't simply leave all of the lights on when you're gone...a dead giveaway. Use timers or have a neighbor assist.

Don't allow papers or mail to stack up in the mailbox or driveway.

Don't rely on clamshell window locks. They're uneven, don't fit, and easily jimmied with a knife.

Don't leave valuables in obvious places: nightstands, chest of drawers, desks, closets, etc. Be creative.

Don't leave packing materials from valuable purchases out on the curb or in the alley. Break down containers and dispose of discretely.

Don't buy items off the street from someone whose character you can't vouch for. You may be receiving stolen property and adding to the burglary problem.

Don't deliberately confront a burglar. There may be more than one; they may be on drugs, or have a weapon and you might frighten them into a confrontation when most go to great lengths to avoid conflict.

Do watch your neighbor's property and note suspicious persons and vehicles. Notify the Metro Police at 862-8600 and give a description: location, number of suspects, race, age, clothing, vehicle description and tag number. If it's a burglary in progress, call 911. Keep watching and stay on the line.

Do strengthen all doors and locks – solid core or metal doors and dead bolt locks, little or no glass, and the door jam should be as solid as the door. Consider that two deadbolts spread the force of a blow.

Do install a wide-angle peephole to inspect visitors.

Do change tumblers if you lend keys and lose track of them.

Do lock or bolt windows. Approximately 25% of burglars enter this way. Most won't break the glass.

Do install locks on sliding glass doors to prevent door from being lifted out of the track.

Do secure window-mounted air conditioners so they're not easily removed or pushed in.

Do secure garages and basement windows – consider a metal grill.

Do deactivate garage door openers when gone for extended periods of time.

Do consider outside lighting with infrared sensors. Floodlights are best.

Do lock up when at home, when cutting the grass or gardening. Burglars drive around looking for this opportunity and just walk inside.

Do use care with wedding and funeral announcements.

Do consider a dog – the larger the better. Use "Beware of Dog" signs. (Keep vacuum cleaner in obscure location, as thieves can run a dog into a bedroom if the dog fears the vacuum cleaner.)

Do mark and photograph/video valuables and keep a home inventory record with brand names, model numbers, serial numbers and other owner applied markings or distinguishing characteristics.

Do consider lawn care and house sitters while on vacation.

Do consider safes, either hidden or large, heavy gun safes.

Do consider a professionally installed and monitored alarm system with stickers and an audible alarm.