

BURGLARY -- A CRIME THAT HITS HOME

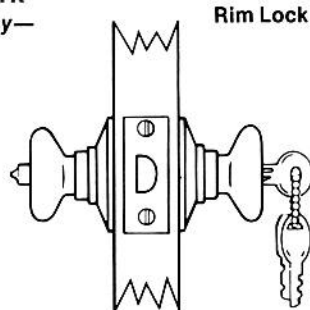


Tips on how to burglar
proof your home and
valuables

It's a well-known fact that it just isn't smart to confront a burglar. The time to match wits with intruders is before they intrude. Since many burglaries occur when you are expected to be away from your home, it's your job to convince a would-be burglar that your home is occupied at all times, and that you have protected your home to the point of eliminating easy access. Here are some basic suggestions:

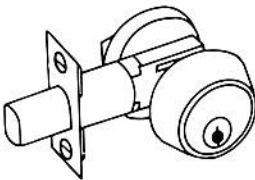
Locks That Work

*You may have privacy—
but what about real
security?*

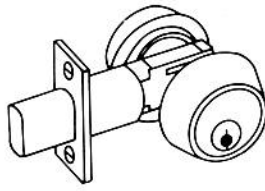


The "lock-in-knob" pictured here offers you privacy and convenience — but not necessarily security from intruders. In fact, some "lock-in-knob" locks can be slipped open using a simple credit card! For safety, you need a secure lock.

Deadbolt Locks



**Single Cylinder
Deadbolt**



**Double Cylinder
Deadbolt**

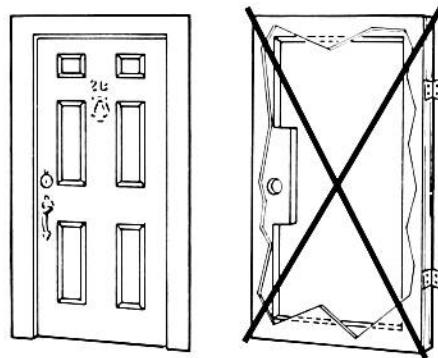
A deadbolt lock has a solid metal bar that covers the gap between a door and its frame. The word "dead" means that there are no springs to operate the bolt. When fully engaged, it cannot be pushed back by a credit card or any other flexible shimming device. It must be manually locked (thrown) and unlocked (retracted).

It's important that a reinforcing strike be used with the deadbolt lock. (See illustration.) The strike should be anchored in the studs of the building so the door can't be kicked in. Double cylinder deadbolt locks require a key to operate either side. They are especially useful when doors contain glass panels that might be broken to reach inside and unlock the door.

Don't scrimp on locks. Purchase high-quality, name-brand locks. Consult your locksmith, and consider having him do the installation.

Sturdy Doors and Frames

*Look for a sturdy door
and frame
construction.*



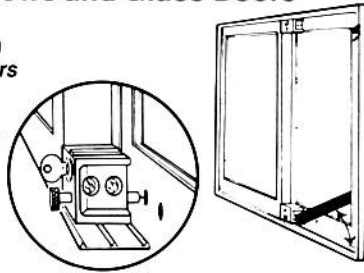
Since most intruders enter a residence by physically compromising a door or frame, strong doors and frames are essential to your security, including your garage door. Steel doors and frames provide good security. They are harder to destroy than simple wooden doors and frames.

If you have wooden doors and frames, you can help increase your security by taking out the least possible amount of wood when installing any security device. Many wooden doors are hollow but use solid wood construction at lock and hinge installation points. If you remove any of this wood, your door is structurally weakened and easier to break down (see diagram). Even the best locks in the world are useless if installed on severely weakened doors.

Secure Windows and Glass Doors

Bar burglars from sliding glass doors and windows.

A broomstick will work but locks are better.



People often install sturdy locks on their front doors but leave sliding glass doors “wide open” to illegal entry. Usually, a sliding door is more secluded from public view than a front door, making a perfect place for thieves to enter. One way to help increase your security is to install a bolt lock on your door as illustrated — to help prevent the door from being slid or lifted off its track.

Window locks that secure both the inside and outside frames can provide another effective means of thwarting the would-be burglar.

Bars can be used for reinforcement.

Although many bars are unsightly, attractive decorative bars can be obtained to better secure a kitchen door window. A bar on the door to a basement or garage as well as bars on basement windows can frustrate would-be burglars.

When you're gone from home

This is when the majority of burglaries occur — in daytime hours as well as just before and after dark. Whether you've gone shopping, visiting, or on vacation, the burglar can time his visit to coincide with your departure and return. He'll check you by telephone (“sorry-wrong number”) or he'll boldly test your doorbell for response. Or he may case your home and — if it looks or sounds like it's occupied — pass up your home for another. And don't leave your home unlocked even if you're home or in the yard.

Don't advertise that you'll be gone

Don't tell strangers or casual acquaintances that you'll be out of town. Though they may seem trustworthy, you'd be surprised how quickly news spreads. *Do* tell the neighbor who is watching your home where you'll be and how long you'll be gone. In case anything happens,

the neighbor can make a prompt report to the police.

Don't pack the car for vacation outside; use your garage, and don't leave your suitcase outside when waiting for a ride to the airport.

Do let the police know how long you'll be gone and where to reach you. They will be glad to make periodic checks of your home to see that all is in order.

Where are your keys?

You've defeated the purpose of locks if you don't know where your keys are. If there's a chance that a former owner or tenant might still have a key, change the locks.

When you're in the house, keep the key for a deadbolt lock in a place where you can get to it quickly in case of fire. You can leave the key in the lock if there isn't any glass in the door or a window within 40" of the lock where someone could smash the glass and grab the key.

You could also hang the key on a hook, approximately one foot above the floor near the door. This puts it out of the reach of potential burglars and in case of fire, you can avoid harmful smoke and fumes by crawling to it.

Don't hide a key under a mat or in the mailbox. These will be the first places a burglar will look.

If you must leave a key behind, keep it with a trusted neighbor. Make sure that each member of your family knows where his or her key is.

Remember, if you can keep burglars occupied for several minutes trying to get a door or window open, they'll become frustrated and move on to another place. This applies to your locked automobile also.

Leave some lights on

Leave some lights on when gone from home. A couple of timers set to turn your lights on and off automatically should be used. However, don't leave the lights on 24 hours a day. Lights burning night and day don't look natural. Set the timer so the lights are on until normal bedtime hours. Burglars are nervous about two-story homes that have lights burning on both floors. Outdoor, low-voltage lights on timers and neatly trimmed shrubs and foliage eliminate potential hiding places and allow neighbors and police to see and report any suspicious activity.

A radio turned on may turn off a thief

Most burglars won't take the chance of entering a home when someone might be there. Make your home or apartment "sound" occupied by leaving a radio or television playing during short absences.

During longer absences, both the radio and television can be put on timers which will make the home appear "more normally occupied" to the burglar.

Leave drapes in a normal position

Drapes or shades fully drawn and closed give a deserted look to a home or apartment. Leave your drapes slightly parted.

Keep valuables away from the windows

Keeping valuables in plain sight makes it easier for burglars to see what they want to take. Put the valuables in a closet or upstairs room when you are away to avoid unnecessary temptation.

Mark your valuables

Many local police departments have etching tools available on a free-loan basis for you to use. By marking your valuables, they can be more easily traced back to you in case of theft.

Even the minor expense of buying the tool is well worth it. It could mean recovery of an item that couldn't be replaced at any price. Using the tool will discourage most burglars because it's tough to hock a marked item. Using an easily identifiable number, such as your driver's license number and state abbreviation, can assist police in tracking down the owner of some recovered property. Your Social Security number is much more difficult to verify.

Make an inventory of all your belongings and any serial numbers. Update it and keep it somewhere besides your house, for instance a safety deposit box, so that a burglar doesn't find it and use it as a shopping list.

The garage — a target also

Your garage and its possessions are part of your home, too. Keeping it locked is just as important as keeping your home locked, especially if the garage is attached to the home. Once inside the garage a burglar can work uninterrupted at getting into the house. A deadbolt lock is especially important here.

Your driveway and yard are part of your home

If possible, leave a car parked in your driveway. Maybe a neighbor or a friend will accept the use of the driveway in your absence.

A lawn not mowed or snow left unshoveled is an invitation for a burglar to check out the home more closely. A neighbor child might be willing to earn some money by attending to the lawn or snow. The point is, make your home look inhabited!

Don't conceal your windows and doors with shrubbery. Keep the shrubbery trimmed in front of your dwelling and at the sides and rear.

Deliveries can be a giveaway

An accumulation of mail, milk or papers is a sure sign that a resident is not at home. Arrange in advance to have a neighbor take in any papers, mail or free samples that arrive while you're gone.

Garbage and trash

A home that doesn't accumulate any garbage and trash for a week or even a few days is unusual. While you're gone from home, have a neighbor put some refuse in your receptacles or, if your garbage is picked up at curbside, have the neighbor put a few bags in front of your home.

How do you know if your home is secure?

If you're unsure as to how secure your home or apartment is, or if you'd like ways of making it more secure, ask your local police.

Most police departments will be glad to perform a free security survey of your residence. They'll look for any weak spots such as inadequate locks that may provide entrance for a burglar. The police won't recommend what brand of lock to use, but they will aid you in choosing the proper type of lock.

Bicycles are hot theft items

Bikes disappear from schools, stores and residences. Even if you go inside your home or apartment for just a moment, lock your bike! When you put your bike into your garage or storage area, lock it to something stationary. Bikes that simply have a lock through the wheels can be put in a van or station wagon and driven off in a few seconds.

A bike cable locked around a stationary object and the bike can make more work for a would-be burglar.

Your lock should be regular equipment that goes with your bike at all times. Be sure to use a strong lock and cable at least a quarter-inch thick. These are available with plastic coating to protect the bike from scratches.

Be alert for strangers

So many burglaries could be stopped or prevented if only more people would report suspicious happenings.

If your doors or windows look as if they've been tampered with, double the security and notify the police. Ask your neighbor who will be watching your home to check for you.

Notify the police immediately of any suspicious people, trucks or cars in the neighborhood. Don't worry about being a nuisance. The police will welcome your call and the opportunity to prevent a burglary.

Install peepholes in your external doors, and don't open the door to someone you don't know. Don't trust a safety chain which forces easily.

Don't let anyone in without proper credentials. If you haven't called or made an appointment with a service representative, don't let him in. You can always call and verify with his employer while he waits outside. Then let him in.

Those belongings are yours. So, keeping them out of the hands of burglars and thieves is your responsibility.

Now that your home is secure, are you?

Thieves are anywhere that temptations exist. Lock your car and take the keys with you. Put any valuables and sports equipment in the trunk or, if you don't have a trunk, cover your belongings with something to keep them out of sight.

In a hotel, always lock your door even when you are in the room. Many rooms have been burglarized while the people are in the shower. It's a good idea to keep your valuables in hotel or motel vaults, and watch all your possessions as if they were irreplaceable.

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