

Home Burglary Prevention Tips

Keeping your home safe while you're away

Summertime often means vacation time!

But while you're away, is your home safe and secure from burglary? According to the Insurance Information Institute, there are more than 2.15 million burglaries each year, over 65 percent of which are residential break-ins, with the majority occurring in the peak vacation months of July and August.

So how can you make sure your home is protected while you are off enjoying your summertime plans? Here are some household burglary prevention tips that can help ensure that the only thing you have to worry about during your vacation is sunburn!



- Don't share your vacations plans online. Many people are active on social media sites like Facebook, Google+, and My Space. In many cases you might have a 500 friends online but only 15 of them are close friends. Don't announce your vacation plans to everyone in your social media empire; that's basically announcing to 500 people that your house will be empty for a week. 499 of them may be trustworthy, but it only takes one to ruin a vacation.
- Don't reference your vacation on voice-mail or email "out of office" replies either; simply say you are away from your desk and you will reply when available.
- Don't leave messages on your door (like for a delivery person) that you are away from home.
- Use motion sensor lights on the exterior of your home.
- Double check that all outside doors and windows are locked when leaving your home.
- Keep your garage door closed and locked.
- Trim all bushes and trees around your home to prevent hiding places for intruders.
- Install solid, sturdy doors with deadbolts on the exterior of your home, and install quality locks on windows. Thieves are not looking for a challenge. Anything that slows them down, will increase the chances of them giving up.
- Do not keep large amounts of cash, valuables, or jewelry lying around the house. Especially within view from the windows.
- Change locks if your keys have been lost or stolen.
- Lock garden shed doors and store lawn mowers, barbecues, bicycles, etc. out of sight.
- Use curtains on garage door windows and basement windows.
- Never hide keys under doormats, flower pots, etc. Burglars know where to look for hidden keys.
- Get to know your neighbors. Watch out for suspicious people or vehicles at each others homes.
- Engrave all valuables with your driver's license number or other personal id number.
- Video record or photograph the contents of your home with serial and identification numbers. This also helps in the event of fire. Your insurance company may recommend you record the value, purchase date, serial number, etc. to identify property.
- Use timers for your interior lights to come on in the evening and shut off during the day. (Simply leaving lots of lights on is not a great idea. It will definitely look strange come midnight, and wastes energy too).
- Arrange for the Post Office to hold your mail (this can easily be done online in a matter of minutes) , or for someone to pick up mail and newspapers while you are gone.
- Have someone mow your lawn while you are away.
- Leave a car in the driveway.
- Make breaking into your home noisy. Consider installing an alarm system.