



Security around the home & on holidays Guide

Do Burglars have holidays?

The obvious answer is no, they don't. It's actually the most opportune moment for them to take advantage of the hot summer nights with doors unlocked, windows open, if it's just around Christmas time, there's also new toys and possessions around. Neighbours may also not be on as much a look out for strangers with the holidays the perfect time for relatives and friends to drop over unexpectedly. Parties are common on holidays so strange cars in the street don't arouse as much suspicion, as are the late night sounds of parties and the day time sounds of renovations.

Safety tips for the garden



Lawns that aren't mowed, bushes that are overgrown and trees too close to your house can be good hiding places and can also indicate that you're away. On the positive however, thorny bushes underneath windows can make it difficult for burglars.

Keep all the areas in and around your property well lit. A dark property is more attractive to burglars, so if you can, install motion sensor lights as well as outdoor lights. Use a timer to make them operate at normal times.

It is also a good idea to install lights on outdoor buildings, such as sheds or garages.

Always lock all windows and doors when you leave your home, even for a few minutes! Many burglaries happen during the day, when people are at work or school. Many people don't realise an unlocked door is an open invitation to a burglar! Don't hide keys around the exterior of your home. Burglars will look in mailboxes, under doormats and above door entrances for keys, so don't make it easy to break into your home. If you're going to be away, even for a few days, leave emergency house keys with a trusted neighbour.



Do not put your name on your mailbox or on an answering machine. Burglars look for any information that might assist them gaining access to your home. Only put the house number on your mailbox and door. Lower the volume on your house/office phone, burglars won't hear unanswered phone calls – a sign that no one is home.

Consider a professional Home security Surveillance Package or a monitored burglar alarm system. Alarm systems can help deter intruders. Make sure your burglar alarm system includes a loud inside alarm, detectors at all exterior doors and motion sensors in various rooms and around perimeters of your home. Insurance companies can often make your policy cost less if you have professional home security.

Safety tips for the House



- Install and use good locks on doors and windows.
- Don't hide keys under the doormat, in the mailbox or in a planter.
- When service or delivery people come to your door, ask for ID, and check with their company if you're still not sure.
- Make sure the street number on your house is large, well-lighted and unobstructed so emergency personnel can find your home quickly.



- If you decide to install an alarm system, consider one that is monitored for burglary, fire and medical emergencies

Do I have adequate security?

- Do the locks on doors and windows operate correctly?
- Do I have timers for lights, TV and the radio?
- Do my alarm and locks meet Australian standards?

Am I using my home security properly?

Here are some tips for the everyday care of your home:

- Leave a key with a trusted friend or neighbour instead of hiding a spare key that could be found.
- Do not leave spare keys or car keys readily available inside the house.
- Consider installing motion-activated lighting in your yard.
- It is best to lock up any tools in a shed.
- If you like pets, then dogs can be your best burglar alarm. If not, a 'beware of the dog' sign may still deter a burglar.
- If you have unique items of jewellery and other collectables, consider a portable and concealable hide-away safe, available in a variety of sizes.
- If you purchase expensive electrical appliances, cut the boxes into pieces before recycling because boxes left on the nature strip can let burglars know what is new in your house.
- Back-up computer hard drives and keep these copies in a different location to prevent the loss of information on your computer.
- Mark your property using an engraver or ultra-violet markers, with a 'V' (for Victoria) followed by your licence number. These markers are now available to buy from various electrical stores in Victoria. Marked property is much harder for burglars to resell.

Here are some tips to help you be prepared in case you need to file an insurance claim:

- Make a list of your property for insurance purposes
- It is a good idea to take photos of expensive items, such as jewellery
- Ensure you have current and adequate insurance cover.



Safe behaviour in your home

Whether you are at home or not, there are things you can do to help make your home, and you, safer.

- Know your neighbours - get to know who is supposed to live there and look after each other. They will be more inclined to look after your place if you know them.
- Create an invisible housemate - Women living alone may choose to have a male relative or friend speak on their answering machine, such as "We're unable to take your call, please leave a message."
- Ask before opening the door - if it is a stranger at the door, talk to them through a locked screen door.
- Do not let strangers in - if someone asks to use your phone you should direct them to the nearest phone box, or make the call for them.
- Do not give personal details - avoid telling people on the phone or at the door personal information such as marital status, working hours, employment and the number of people living at the house
- Check credentials of tradespeople - if in doubt, do not let them in. Ask for formal identification and ring their company to check.
- Do not let children answer the phone - if your children are at home unsupervised, let the answering machine or message bank take the call as people can glean information about your whereabouts.
- Trust your instinct - if you feel unsafe or if you think someone is inside, do not enter the house. Use your mobile phone or go to a neighbour and call police on 000.
- Keep out of sight and a safe distance from the house and, if you see them leave, take note of their personal description and car registration, make and colour.

Safety tips outside the home

- Hold your bag close or keep your wallet in an inside front pocket.
- Don't carry large amounts of cash or unneeded credit cards.



- Keep car doors locked, be watchful in parking lots and garages, and try to park in well-lit spots near entrances.
- Sit near the driver or the exit when riding on a bus or train.
- If a person or situation makes you nervous, get away.
- Don't Fall for Con Artists' Tricks.



If it sounds too good to be true — free holiday, sure-fire investment — avoid it.

It is illegal for telemarketers to ask for credit card, phone card or bank account numbers to verify prizes, so if anyone asks, don't give it to them.

If someone tries to rush you into signing an insurance policy, sales contract or anything else, be suspicious. Read it carefully and have a trusted friend check it, too.

- Some con artists pose as representatives of companies or government agencies that, for a fee, recover money lost to fraudulent telemarketers. Don't fall for this trick.

Points to remember

Make sure your street number is clearly visible from the street as this will help police, fire and ambulance to find your home in an emergency

Check whether your fences and gates restrict access to your property as good sturdy steel fencing or concrete fencing is a strong deterrent to thieves

Keep trees and shrubs well-trimmed to allow visibility of your home and reduce a thieves opportunity to burgle your property

A tell-tale sign for thieves is your mailbox. Be sure to have your mailbox cleared while you are away

Have key operated locks on all windows to prevent thieves entering



Always keep a record of the serial numbers of your valuables as this will help police to locate your items

Always lock outside doors and windows when you go out even if you are only going to be away for 5 minutes

If you go out at night it's a good idea to have some internal lights and a radio on.

Do not leave keys hidden outside your house as an experienced thief will know about all the hiding places

If you are in the garden or watching TV, lock parts of the house you can't keep an eye on

If you have a lot of jewellery, valuable documents, cash or other negotiable items, it is probably worthwhile to consider installing a safe or burglar alarm

Keep in mind that the most common entry point for a burglary is the garage, followed by the bedroom and kitchen and secure your home appropriately.

A thought to ponder

By reviewing your home / business security requirements in detail, understanding its limitations and taking advantage of good advice and services available, you can have better peace of mind and a better chance at thwarting thieves.

At aussiesurveillance.com.au we wish you all the best in finding the product that's right for your needs and our further advice is never more than our website away.

This document was written as a guide only. For further information please contact Aussie surveillance.com.au

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