

Harden Your Target: Home Security

Residential burglars know many of us are lax when it comes to home security. While there is no guarantee that you will not be the victim of a crime regardless of the precautions taken, **simple measures can discourage a burglar** so they will look elsewhere.

To deter, delay, deny, or detect a burglar:

- **Always lock your doors and windows** even when leaving for “just a minute.”
Sash windows can be “pinned” to prevent someone from forcing open. (note #1.)
Sliding doors and windows should either be drilled and pinned or secured with a patio door lock.
Basement windows can be nailed/screwed shut, barred, or glass blocked.
- Never leave a **house key** under a doormat, in a flower pot, or on the ledge of a door.
- **Exterior doors** should have a one-inch **deadbolt lock** that can only be opened with a key. The strike plate should be secured with 3” long screws. Replace soft, rotted door frames with new, solid wood.
- Make sure the entire perimeter of your home is **well-lit**, especially front and back door areas. Lights should be out of reach from ground level.
- **Trim all shrubbery/trees** which obstruct a clear view of the entrances and windows of your home. Thorny plants or bushes around your house deter unwanted people from approaching your home's windows.
- When away for any length of time:
 - **Use timers** so that lights, radio, and TV go on and off at various times throughout the house to indicate that someone may be home.
 - Have someone you trust collect, on a daily basis, mail, newspapers, or anything else that might be delivered or left on your property.
 - Give neighbor your trip plans and an emergency phone number.
 - Ask a neighbor to use your garbage cans, mow your lawn, shovel your walk, park in your driveway **so your absence won't be so evident**.
 - Don't advertise on social media websites when you will be traveling.
- If your residence has a jimmied door or a broken window, don't go in. Confronting a burglar can be dangerous. Instead, **call 9-1-1**. Let a police officer ensure your safety.
- Do not leave the porch light on during the day.
- **NEVER open the door to strangers**. Always demand to see identification before opening the door. If the person acts suspicious or refuses to provide identification –**call the police immediately!**
- Draw and/or close all curtains, blinds, and shutters at night and when away.
- Make sure all side and back gates are closed and well locked.
- Do not leave notes on your door indicating you are out or when you will return.
- Do not keep your cash and jewelry in **predictable places** (nightstands, drawers).
- Move valuables (laptops, electronics, purse, and keys) **away from outside view** and off of **countertops, hooks, chairs** next to entry ways.

- Keep **garage** doors closed and locked at all times, even when close by. “Pin” the overhead door track so it cannot be forced open or secure with a “C” clamp.
- Invest in an **alarm system**; if you have an alarm system, be sure to use it. Inexpensive battery door/window and motion detector alarms are a deterrent.
- Engrave or stencil electronics, tools, mowers, snow blowers, etc. with your driver’s license number. Keep a record of all serial numbers, receipts, inventory list, take pictures so police can return recovered items and a claim can be filed with insurance.

Be active on your block so you **get to know your neighbors**, they are your best crime deterrent. They may spot a burglar before you ever know someone is attempting to enter your home. Watch your neighbor’s house as you would your own. Be watchful of area businesses as well.

You are the eyes and ears for the police. **Be cognizant of suspicious activity** on streets, sidewalks, and alleys. **Trust your instincts**. Don’t worry about bothering the police – that is why they are there. Don’t worry if your suspicions prove unfounded. Provide as much information as possible to help officers identify the suspect or connect to patterns of other reported activity. (See Notes 2, 3)

Note 1. Pinning can be easily done in double hung windows by drilling an angled hole through the top frame of the lower window into the frame of the upper window. Eye bolts or nails can then be inserted into the holes. A second hole can be drilled in the upper window frame so that with “pin” inserted the window can be partially opened, but not enough for someone to climb in.

Note 2. District 3 **Non-emergency # is 933-4444**, when menu options start **enter “9”** so that the call goes to communicator and gets recorded. Information needed by police: What happened? When? Where? Is anyone injured? Vehicle description and license number? Direction of flight? Description of persons?

Note 3. What is suspicious? Strangers wandering, sitting in parked cars, or driving slowly; persons looking into windows, yards, vehicles, garages, loitering, going door to door, trying doorknobs. Large accumulations of property – may be stolen. Property being removed from or placed into vehicles or buildings. Open or broken doors or windows. Unusual noises – anything suggesting dangerous or foul play. Heavy human traffic to and from a certain residence. Unusual noises: gunshots, screaming, sounds of a fight, breaking glass, barking dogs. Apparent open-air business transactions conducted from a vehicle. Abandoned vehicle.

For Reference:

Copies of PCSD-25 “**Target Harden your Home,**” PCSD-22 “**What is Suspicious,**” and PCSD-90 “**OPERATION I.D., Property Inventory**” can be obtained from Dist. 3 Community Liaison Officer.

Also visit: http://www.wicrimeprevention.com/?page_id=789. The “Handouts/Pamphlets” section on this site, as well as the above PCSD documents, provide drawings and additional details on this topic.