

Crime
reduction
advice

Reducing home crime



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Reducing home crime

A burglary at home is a distressing and devastating experience that can impact on your whole family. Despite this, many homes are remarkably insecure. One-in-three burglars don't have to force their way in – they get in through an open door or window.

Removing this kind of temptation would prevent an estimated 90% of all burglaries.

The advice in this leaflet will help you to protect your home and outwit potential intruders.

If your doors are insecure, your home is insecure too

- Make sure doors and door frames are strong and in good condition.
- Fit robust deadlocks conforming to British Standard BS3621 on



Burglar alarms and lights will deter thieves

your front and back doors and keep them locked at all times – even when you are at home.

Check your windows

- Ensure your windows and window frames are in good condition.
- Fit window locks – thieves hate attracting attention by breaking glass.
- Always lock your windows when you leave home and double-check that French windows and patio doors are secure.
- Ensure sliding patio doors that slide on the outside cannot simply be lifted up and off the runners by potential offenders.

Lighting-up time

Making potential thieves feel exposed when approaching your property can help reduce the risk of a burglary.

- Install low wattage lighting that comes on automatically at dusk and goes off at dawn.
- Locate lights carefully so they don't create dark shadowed areas that could provide hiding places for thieves.
- Using economy light bulbs costs less than 1p per night and you can control the on/off cycle by using a timer.

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Fit a burglar alarm

A visible burglar alarm will make a potential intruder think twice. Use it whenever you leave the house and when you go to bed – most alarms can be set to go off in a particular part of the house (downstairs only, when you are upstairs, for example).

Internal security advice

- Do not leave car, door or window keys on view. Never leave keys within reach of a letterbox or a window.
- Never leave spare keys in an obvious place, such as under a flower pot or a doormat. Leave them with a trusted neighbour or relative instead.
- Move valuable items away from windows and put them out of sight.
- Register valuable property at www.immobilise.com or keep an inventory including description, serial number and photograph of each item.



Make sure your home looks occupied while you are away

- Use an ultraviolet pen or forensic coding product to 'property mark' all valuable items with your postcode and house number. This makes them uniquely identifiable. Place signs or stickers around your home to make it clear that your property is marked.
- Do not keep large amounts of cash at home. If you have to do so, use a home safe that is stored out of sight.
- When moving into a new

house, change the locks to avoid strangers having a set of your new keys.

Going away?

Around half of all burglaries

- happen in empty homes. The best deterrent is to make your home look occupied while you are away.
- Use an automatic timer switch to turn interior lights on and off.
 - Ask a trusted neighbour to park their car on your drive occasionally and to open your curtains in the mornings and close them in the evenings.

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Also take the following precautions:

- Don't discuss holiday plans in the presence of strangers – and don't post details on social media websites.
- Cancel milk, newspaper or other regular deliveries.
- Mow the lawn and tidy the garden.
- Lock sheds, garages and windows.
- Place important documents in a home safe or deposit them in a bank.
- Ask a neighbour to collect your mail, or use the Royal Mail 'Keepsafe' service.
- Give contact details to a neighbour in case of emergency – and ensure they know your return date.
- Ask your local Neighbourhood



Mark valuable items with your postcode and house number to make them identifiable

- Watch scheme to keep an eye on your home while you are away.
- When travelling to your holiday destination, don't display your home address on your luggage tag.

For more crime prevention advice visit www.surrey.police.uk

Contacting Surrey Police

For non-emergency calls or to contact your local police officer call **0845 125 2222*** or **01483 571212**, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Always dial **999** in an emergency.

If you have hearing difficulties or speech impairment, our minicom number is **1800** or **01483 539999**.

* The cost of calls from landlines and mobiles may vary. Surrey Police does not profit from the provision of this number.