

Community: Home Burglaries Have Increased. Make Safety A Habit. Good Tips on How To Keep Your Stuff:

Burglary victims often feel vulnerable and violated as their personal space has been invaded. Records show that home burglaries often occur during the day while families are at work or school.

The most common entry technique is a hard kick to the door, forcing the wooden jamb to give way. Household tools like hammers, screwdrivers, pry bars and pliers may be used to gain entry into your home.

Unfortunately, it is hard to catch burglars in the act and harder to catch them after the fact.

While residential burglaries seem random, burglars usually choose their targets. Unoccupied homes with easy or concealed access and quick escape routes are targeted.

Once inside your home, burglars look for small expensive items that are easily traded for cash. Favorite items include cash, jewelry, laptops, CD/DVD players, game consoles, watches, guns and small electronic devices.

Protect yourself and make your home a less likely target with the below ideas. Also, share this with people you care about and help them to protect their home and safety too. Maybe you could give a loved one a gift of installing a dead bolt on their door for them? Sounds like a really practical gift, so maybe give some flowers with it.

DISCOURAGE BURGLARS AND KEEP YOUR STUFF OUT OF THEIR HANDS:

While On Vacation:

- Ask a family member or friend or hire a house sitter to live in your home
- Ask neighbors to help with your trash bins and newspaper.
- Install an approved and monitored residential alarm system.
- Park a neighbor's car in your driveway.
- Use timers on indoor lights to give the impression you are home.
- Have merchandise delivered to a neighbor's house.
- Request Vacation Home Checks from your local Sheriff's or Police Station:

<http://shq.lasdnews.net/content/uoa/SHQ-SHQ-DP-Sheriff'sVolunteer.aspx>

Bright Ideas:

- Install lights by all exterior doors. Use lights at night.
- Install outside light fixtures where bulbs are hard to reach.
- Illuminate house numbers for quick emergency services response.

Doors & Windows:

- * Install good quality dead-bolts on your doors and USE THEM.
- Change the locks when moving into a new residence.
- Always lock your doors and windows.
- Give your trusted neighbor / family member the spare key – Don't hide it outside.
- Use solid core or metal exterior doors.
- Use dead bolt door locks on exterior doors and double cylinder dead bolt locks if glass is within 3 feet of the lock.
- Add auxiliary track-type locks, removable drop bars, wooden dowels, or pinning devices to windows and sliding glass doors.
- Upgrade locks to defeat bump keying.
- Install peepholes on doors with 160 degree views so you don't have to open the door to see outside.
- Use a locking mailbox.
- Never leave notes for anyone on the door.
- Keep your valuable personal information in a safe deposit box.
- Complete Operation ID and display the window stickers:

<http://www.opid.org/>

Landscaping:

- Trim tree branches 7 feet off the ground.

- Prune shrubs to under 3 feet from the ground.
- Use motion sensors and photocells on exterior floodlights.
- Trim shrubs back from doors and windows. Don't give burglars places to hide while they are breaking in.

Dealing With Strangers:

- Never let strangers enter your home.
- Verify workers by identification cards and calling their employer.
- Never give keys to workers.

Vehicle Smarts:

- Close the garage door and cover windows so no one can see inside.
- Hide the garage door opener from open view in your car.

* Don't leave valuables like your purse or GPS in plain sight

* A shopping bag may be empty but looks valuable, so burglars will break in to get that too.

Make safety a habit.

Lock your home at all times.

Join your local Neighborhood Watch, or create one - contact your local Sheriff's or Police Station:

<http://www.ncpc.org/topics/home-and-neighborhood-safety/neighborhood-watch>

For emergencies, call 911

Partner to prevent crime by contacting your local sheriff's station with information about possible criminal activity or if you wish to remain Anonymous, call "LA Crime Stoppers" by dialing 800-222-TIPS (8477), texting the letters TIPLA plus your tip to CRIMES (274637), or using the website <http://lacrimestoppers.org>