

## 1. Always lock up.

Don't overlook the obvious. Doors and windows should be locked, not only when we leave the house, but when we are elsewhere in the house, eg on the phone, in the gardens, watching TV, otherwise preoccupied, away from the points of entry

## 2. Cut away the camouflage

Cultivate a garden, but not a burglars' paradise. Burglars love camouflage. Site trees, shrubs, walls and fences so an intruder can be clearly seen in your front or backyard and keep bushes around doors and trimmed.

## 3. Deadlock the main doors

the main door is the most likely point of entry and should be your first priority. Key-operated deadlock on a solid timber door is the safest option. If intruders get into your house through another entry, a key-operated deadlock on the main door will make it more difficult for them to carry out stolen goods out. Reinforce the deadlock where possible with security screen, and peephole, so you get to see any visitor before they see you.

## 4. Synchronise door locks

Install the same key – operated lock systems on all the doors – it makes locking up easier, and security firms can install tamper – proof lock. Sliding glass doors are particularly vulnerable and should be bolted top and bottom or fitted with specifically designed deadlocks.

## 5. Secure all windows

No windows are too high or too small for burglars. All windows should be secured with keyed locks or security grills. Do not resort to a piece of dowel in windows tracks, and lock all upper – level windows; they are easier to reach than you think.

## 6. Light up at night

keep doors, windows, and pathways well-lit at night. Movement activated sensor lights are highly recommended.

## 7. Lock the side gates

Side gates are easily overlooked. They should also be securely locked, and children and grandchildren educated to always lock the gates behind them.

## 8. Co-opt a canine

Consider keeping a dog. Even if you don't own one, think about hanging a 'beware of the dog' sign at any outside gates. If burglars – unfriendly dog can be good enough reason for many to beat a retreat

## 9. Install burglar alarms

the best alarms to complement other forms of household security are highly visible, audible, back-to-base alarms linked to a security service that monitors and responds to their call.

## 10. Lock up the meter box

locking up your meter box prevents thieves interfering with your power supply or security sensor light system. (consult electricity authorities or local councils for further information) remember your meter box still need to be read.

## 11. Padlock garden sheds and garages

Sheds and garages are usually the repository of tools and other implements burglars can use to assist in a break –in. Keep them padlocked. If there is a connecting door between the garage and your house, ensure it is always locked.

## 12. Plan ahead for absences or holiday

an empty house invites burglars. Never leave your house obviously unoccupied, even briefly. Install timer devices that turn lights and radios on and off at night, outside sensors that are movement- activated. Arrange for neighbours or friends to clear out your letterbox and park a car in your driveway occasionally.

Cancel all deliveries, lock away the wheelie bin, (thieves like wheelies to wheel away their loot). Turn the volume down on your answering machine. Replace any ageing locks with deadlocks.

## 13. Prepare for emergency

Ensure your house number is clearly visible... If you have to call police or other emergency services, they should be able to find your house quickly. Programme telephone numbers for emergency services, close friends, relatives or neighbours into your telephone's memory so that in a state of emergency you can summon assistance quickly.

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