

Home Protection Tips

From an article by West Bend Mutual

Nine out of ten household burglaries are preventable. **THINK ABOUT IT.**

Knowing about a burglar's three worst enemies can help protect your home from crime:

1. Light
2. Time
3. Noise

A burglar won't find your home an "easy mark" if he's forced:

- To work in the light;
- Has to take a lot of time breaking in; or
- If he can't work quietly.

Take the time to "case" your house or apartment, just as a burglar would. Here are a few questions you probably should ask yourself:

Q. Where is the easiest entry? How can you make it more burglar resistant?

A. Trim trees and shrubs near your doors and window, and think carefully before installing a high, wooden fence around your back yard. High fences and shrubbery can add to your privacy, and privacy is a burglar's asset. Consider trading a little extra privacy for a bit of added security. Force any would-be burglar to confront a real enemy – light. Exterior lights, mounted out of easy reach, can reduce the darkness a burglar finds comforting.

Q. How can you slow burglars down?

A. Time is a burglar's enemy, too. A burglar delayed for four or five minutes is apt to give up and try for another, less difficult location. So:

- Install good locks and use them. Many homes are guarded only by spring-latch door locks which can often be opened by sliding something, like a credit card, through the door. Any door opening to the outside should have a one-inch key-operated deadbolt lock held in place by screws at least three inches long.
- Secure your windows. Many windows come equipped with latches that enterprising burglars can readily circumvent. To secure double hung windows, for instance, install removable pins through the window sashes (kits are available at most hardware stores).

Q. How about noise?

A. Try to make the general prospect of robbing your home a noisy job. Noise is that important third enemy of the burglar. Many types of alarm systems are available, with detectors mounted on doors and windows. Deciding just how much home protection you need, and can afford, is a personal judgment. Ask your police department or sheriff to have someone survey your home and advise you about suitable protection. If you cannot afford a home security system, consider buying security signs that warn of a system on the premises.

Q. Are any of your valuables, such as a painting, a silver collection, or an antique chair easy to see from the outside?

A. Rearranging your furnishings might be advisable if it serves to make your home less inviting to criminals.

If you ever need to report a burglary or file an insurance claim, a household inventory – a listing of your furniture and major personal belongings – could be a valuable document.

To discuss insurance coverage options, please call Dyste Williams at 952-593-5025.

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