



Home Security Tips



Leaving keys for thieves

It may sound crazy but 7%** of homes has a key concealed outside their front door. Burglars know this so don't leave them the means to let themselves in.

Hook, line and sinker

One in ten (10%) ** people leave keys in doors and windows most of the time. These are easily fished out using a crude hook and line device, through a cat flap or letter box, allowing thieves to walk right into your home and help themselves.

Got it? Use it

There's no point having the securest locks, doors and windows if you don't use them. Opportunistic burglars will make the most of that 'one time' you leave your back door unlocked.

Window shopping

With nearly one in ten (9%) ** sheds left unlocked or unsecured throughout the UK, outbuildings are also vulnerable to crime. Get a sturdy padlock, and hang a net curtain or put frosted film over shed windows to stop thieves window-shopping for bikes, golf clubs and tools.

Anybody home?

Don't leave tell tale clues that you might not be home, like a build up of milk bottles, parcels or post. Cancel deliveries and ask a neighbour to do a quick check of your home every couple of days. Ask your neighbour to bring in your wheelie bin on collection day if you are out at work.

When the clocks go back

Long dark nights in the winter prevent natural surveillance. Install timers to switch lights or radios on and off automatically if you're not home. If you're going out, draw the curtains and leave some lights on.

Keep it clean

Faulty fence work, loose gates, rubbish in the front garden; all give the impression that your home could be an easy target. A well cared for property and garden provides another psychological barrier to the burglar, so trim hedges, repair woodwork and brickwork and keep it tidy. And remember to put away anything that can be used to gain entry including tools, ladders and DIY debris.

Personalise your possessions

If the worst happens and your belongings are stolen, it can help their recovery if you've marked them with a personal identifier. Permanent U.V. marker pens are a cheap and effective way of marking property such as laptops and televisions. UV Pens are available from your NhW street coordinator or Angie Pearson, the Neighbourhood Watch Administrator at Grays Police station, telephone 01375 362118.

Facts

- Households with no home security measures are around ten times more likely to have been victims of burglary than households where there were simple security measures such as deadlocks on doors or window locks. (25.0% compared with 2.3%) *
- More than one in ten (13%) Brits wish they knew more about home security. **
- Nearly one in ten (9%) sheds are left unlocked or unsecured throughout the UK.

•British Crime Survey 2007/2008

** Research conducted with 2,592 adults online between 22nd and 29th August 2008. The survey was carried out by Redshift Ltd.

Source: Angie Pearson, Essex Watch Administrator, Thurrock. Used with kind permission.