



HOME AND GARDEN SECURITY

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 following advice 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 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. The best option is 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.



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 immobilise.com or keep an inventory including description, serial number and photograph of each item. Details of the Immobilise initiative can be found on the States of Jersey Police Crime Reduction pages.
- 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. Burglary Packs are available free of charge at the States of Jersey Police Enquiry Desk, and contain stickers and ultra violet pens.
- 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, by using automatic timer switches to turn interior lights on and off. Also 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.

Also take the following precautions:

- Don't discuss holiday plans in the presence of strangers - and don't post details on social media websites.
- Mow the lawn and tidy the garden.
- Cancel milk, newspaper or other regular deliveries.
- 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 contact Jersey Post.
- Give contact details to a neighbour in case of emergency - and ensure they know your return date.
- Ask your Parish Honorary Police 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.



Reducing shed, garage and garden crime

Burglars aren't only interested in the valuables inside your house. Equipment kept in a garage, shed or garden can be just as tempting (and is sometimes used to break into a house). Many houses are securely alarmed but garages and sheds are often left insecure and therefore offer 'easy pickings' for a criminal.

By following the advice given below you could deter potential burglars and help keep your property safe.

Sheds, garages and outbuildings

- Use a good quality fixing and a padlock to secure shed and garage doors.
- To prevent a burglar from unscrewing door hinges, use anti-tamper screws or smear hard setting glue on the screw-heads.
- If possible, lock any windows or fit internal bars or grilles.
- Install either a mains-powered or battery-powered shed alarm - available from DIY stores.

Tools and equipment

- Use a forensic coding product to 'property mark' all valuable tools and equipment with your postcode and/or house number. This makes items uniquely identifiable - and less attractive to a thief.
- If possible, secure lawnmowers and other valuable equipment to a shed or garage wall.
- Lock tools away when you aren't using them.
- Register valuable equipment at www.immobilise.com or photograph items and take a note of make and model and any serial numbers. This helps with identification if items are stolen.
- If possible, fit a lockable wire-cage for storing expensive items inside your shed.

In the garden

- Lay crunchy gravel on the approach to your house if possible. Thieves hate drawing attention to themselves by making a noise.
- Your wheelie bin could be used as a climbing aid or even as a means of transporting stolen property. Secure it by padlocking it to a wall bracket or drainpipe or position it away from the accessible windows.
- Securing the perimeter of your garden will help to protect your property. Plant low hedges or install low, good quality fencing - it will make a potential burglar feel exposed and perhaps think twice.
- A good option is trellised fencing which doesn't obstruct visibility and is difficult to climb over.



Let nature help

Nature can help provide an effective (and attractive) deterrent to anyone thinking of entering your garden.

- Select your plants carefully. Holly and hawthorn are particularly difficult to get through.
- Protect drainpipes with anti-climb paint or a climbing rose to deter access to windows and flat roofs.
- Plant prickly, deciduous shrubs next to walls or fences as an effective barrier for anyone attempting to climb in.

The States of Jersey Police document “Defensive Planting Information” shows the advantages of Defensive Planting and provides a list of shrubs suitable for this purpose. These shrubs can provide an effective and decorative thief proof barrier. If you would like a copy of this, contact the States of Jersey Police Crime Reduction Officer, or download from the Crime Reduction section of our website.

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