

## **Nine Ways to Keep Your Home Safe and Secure**

Your home is probably your most valuable possession, along with everything inside. It is a place you want to feel safe and secure from the potential dangers of the outside world.

Employing and engaging in some basic best practices around home security is the first step to help create a secure environment for your loved ones and family.

Consider these tips to help keep you and your family, and your possessions, safe and secure.

### **Safe landscaping**

As you walk around your property, look for areas that could be potential hiding spots for thieves, who prize the privacy they provide. Try and clear away any overgrown areas.

### **Talk with your local police department**

Ask your police department to come and inspect your home and property and provide suggestions to increase home security. They can also offer insight on past break-in trends in your area.

### **Know thy neighbors**

Take the time to meet and engage with people on your street and encourage them to watch out for any suspicious activity when you are not home.

### **Shine a light**

Lighting can set the right ambiance inside your home, but outdoor lighting can be the difference between your home being targeted or not by thieves.

Motion-sensitive fixtures can help add security and provide light when needed. Also consider using automatic timers or a smart lightbulb that can be controlled remotely to turn lights on and off in various parts of the house to help make it seem like you are home.

### **Don't flaunt your purchases**

Thieves look for and steal newly delivered boxes on your front porch, a method called porch pirating, so consider having them delivered elsewhere or requiring a signature for delivery.

Thieves may also look at clues provided by your trash or recycling, which may indicate the new computer or flat-screen television inside.

### **Set a safety routine**

Make sure you establish a routine where you regularly lock all doors, shut windows and turn on your alarm system every time you leave your home.

Avoid leaving spare keys outside, under a planter or under a welcome mat, as thieves know most of the potential hiding places.

### **Manage visibility**

Make sure you can see who is at your front door without opening it. Avoid placing valuables where they will be visible from the street, and do not place your home alarm panel in a place where people can see you arming it from the outside.

### **Protect your outdoor valuables**

Burglars also target sheds, garages and other outdoor buildings. Secure your grill, lawn mower, bicycles and other outdoor gear.

### **Make arrangements when you travel**

Hold your mail, stop your papers and ask a friend or neighbor to remove flyers from your property. Arrange for snow removal and lawn mowing, so you do not advertise when you are away from home.

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