



Preventing Home Burglaries – Checklist

Use the following as a checklist to prevent home burglaries. Burglars look for these signs when they “shop” for a home to burglarize.

- Does your home look unoccupied? Are there newspapers scattered on your lawn? Leave a radio or TV on at a conversational volume level. Have a neighbor pick up your newspaper or any door hangers and advertisements left on your door.
- Does your mailbox appear to have more than one day’s of mail?
- Are the lights always on or always off?
- Are vehicles that are usually in the driveway not there for a long period?
- Are vehicles in the driveway and not used for days?
- Are there high hedges that block windows? Keep shrubs trimmed back. If windows are visible, it is easier for neighbors to spot a broken window. Also, consider planting “thorny” shrubs or rose bushes around windows. If it is painful to access a window over thorny shrubs, a burglar will reconsider his plans.
- On the rear of the home, does a fence block sightlines of doors and windows?
- During the hours of darkness, does a lack of outside lighting make it hard to see what is going on around the perimeter of the home?
- Is there an alarm in the home? If a burglar observes an alarm company’s sign or sticker, he will usually think about moving to another home. Consider an alarm system. Most insurance companies offer discounts for alarms, and some systems even monitor for fire at no additional cost.
- Is your schedule the same everyday? Do you leave for work at the same time everyday? Do you arrive home at the same time everyday? Do you go home for lunch everyday at the same time?
- What is in your trash? Is the box from the newest electronic device such as the new 50” plasma HD TV prominently displayed on your curb awaiting trash pickup? Always tear down boxes and place in the proper receptacle or in a large trash bag, hiding any signs of what you just purchased.
- During the holidays, do you prominently display your tree in the front window complete with beautifully wrapped holiday gifts?
- Do you leave your garage door open? Even if you are working in your yard, you should always keep the garage door closed unless you have full view of the garage at all times. Burglars are known to steal tools that they can use to easily burglarize your home and others in the neighborhood.

- If you do have a garage, do you use it to store your vehicles? Using your garage to store your vehicles makes it harder for burglars to not only determine when you are home and when you are not at home, but also helps to prevent burglary of your vehicles.
- Do you have pets that can make noise? Burglars do not like dogs, even small ones that can make noise.
- Do you leave your windows or doors unlocked? Invest in a good lock and a solid core door if you can. Deadbolt locks with long bolts that terminate in a good, solid door frame makes breaking down a door very difficult.
- Where do you leave a spare key? Burglars know all the hiding places.
- Do you have expensive jewelry that you do not use often secured in a safe deposit box or other secured location?
- Do your home's exterior lights turn on after dark? Consider timers for exterior lights.

Remember to think like a burglar and ask yourself, "what would a burglar find when he looks at my house?"

Encourage your neighbors to join you in forming a Crime Watch group if there is not one already in your area. Crime Watch groups allow all residents and police to share information and work together to combat crime.

If you are interested in forming a Crime Watch group, please contact Senior Corporal Ron Carpenter at ronald.carpenter@dpd.ci.dallas.tx.us