

Secured by Design

Home and Property Crime Prevention Advice



Secured by Design is the official UK Police initiative supporting effective crime prevention and security standards for a large range of products.

In order to help you improve the security at home, we have drawn up a list of recommendations and precautions. If you take the time to assess the security of your home, follow the advice provided and take positive action, you will greatly reduce the risk of becoming a victim.

Most domestic burglaries are committed by opportunist thieves, who pick a home that looks unoccupied, has little or no obvious security, and where they think they will not be seen.

You should start by looking at your home through a burglar's eyes:

- Are there places where they could break in without being seen?
- Would they have to make a lot of noise by breaking glass?
- How would you get in if you forgot your key?

If you can get in, so will a burglar.

Doors

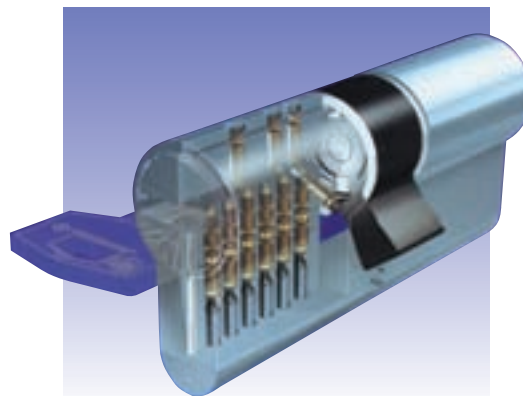
If your front and back doors are not secure, neither is your home. Two thirds of burglars gain entry through a door.

Make sure the doors and frames are strong and in good condition. Doors should be made of solid core construction, at least 44mm thick and fitted with 'high security' deadlocks that carry the British Standard BS3621.

A high security lock is devalued if the door or frame is weak. Consider installing door sets (including door, frame, locks and hinges) that are certified to British Standard (BS) PAS 24-1 and are of enhanced security. For a comprehensive list of SBD approved manufacturers using a range of materials, please visit www.securedbydesign.com

Glass panels on or around the door are especially vulnerable, so make sure they are laminated glass or covered with window security film which will have a similar effect.

Remember to fit all security devices with strong screws or bolts and to manufacturer's instructions.



Identify Callers

If you don't have a window in the door or some other way of checking who's calling, fit a door viewer, vision panel or spy hole and be sure to use it. Ask for a proof of identity; officials will not mind you calling their office for confirmation and if there is any doubt, keep them out.

Sliding Patio Doors

If purchasing sliding patio doors, ensure the sliding door is on the inside, has anti-lift devices and locks fitted to the top and bottom or a multi-locking system. Ask the supplier for their high-security specification.

If the sliding door is on the outside, it may be easily removed from its track unless anti-lift blocks and additional top and bottom locks are fitted.

Letterboxes

Ensure that letterboxes are positioned at least 16" (40cm) away from locks. Fitting a letterbox restrictor and keeping keys out of easy reach will prevent burglars reaching through or 'fishing' for keys.

Door chains

Be aware that whilst door chains allow you to talk to callers, they don't necessarily prevent burglaries.

Door locks

- Doors are safest if fitted with a BS: 3621 5-lever mortise deadlock one-third of the way to the bottom of the door, and a BS:3621 rim latch lock one-third of the way to the top.

If fitting new locks to UPVC doors check with the supplier/manufacturer that it will not affect any warranty. Multi-point locking involves several hooks or bolts holding the door into the frame. The lock cylinders which can be replaced should be tested to BS EN 1303 Grade 3.



Windows

Secure all your windows – a third of burglars get in through a window.

Ground floor windows

- All ground floor and easy to reach windows should be fitted and locked with keys.
- Do not fit locks to windows designated for escape in case of fire – fit laminated glass.
- Remember to remove keys from locked windows and to keep them out of sight in a safe place.

Laminated Glass

Where possible, laminated glass should be used for all windows that are used as fire escape, where locks cannot be fitted or within easy reach of door locks.

Replacement Windows

If you are replacing windows, install those that are certified to British Standard BS:7950 and consider using laminated glass, in vulnerable areas, as it is much harder to break.



Gardens and fences

Deter access to your property and garden.

Stop access to the back garden

Fit 2m fencing and lock gates.

Deter thieves

Plant prickly bushes along boundaries and use gravel which is noisy to walk on.

Remove hiding places

Prune bushes and trees so that thieves can't hide and work without being seen.

Create climbing barriers

Don't place pergolas, gazebos, sheds or storage bins too near to the house; they can help thieves reach upper windows. Fixing trellising to the top of fences can make them more difficult to climb.

Securing your garage and shed

Securing your shed is vital – don't let burglars use your tools to break in.

Ensure that doors are solid enough not to be kicked in and fit strong padlocks.

Never leave a garage or garden shed unlocked, especially if it has a connecting door to the house – a thief could get in and work on the inner door in privacy.

Lock ladders inside the garage or shed to stop a thief using them. If there is no room inside, chain or padlock them horizontally to a sturdy bracket on an outside wall.



Protecting your possessions

Use tested technology to mark property as yours.

Marking your property may deter burglars, can help the police to return items to you and assist prosecution.

Visibly and permanently mark items with your postcode and house number or use commercial marking products that pass the LPS 1225 standard.

If your property and personal details are held on a property database it should pass LPS1224 or BS: 7799 standards.

Keep a record of the make, model and serial number of valuables and take photographs of artworks, unique items and antiques. Do not forget to shred paper documents containing personal or sensitive data.

Computers

With computers being so integrated into our domestic lifestyle, the data and hours of lost effort are equally if not more valuable as the technology.

- Security enclosures and cables are available for desk-tops, laptops and digital video projectors. The standard is LPS 1214.
- Back-up data regularly and store safely away from the computer.
- Use passwords and activate firewalls for Internet connections, particularly if using wireless networks.
- Many laptops have track and trace capability; check with your manufacturer. Remember, data is not easily wiped from old hard drives. Consider professional data destruction.

Lighting

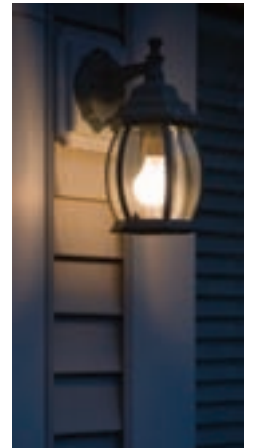
Good lighting can put off or draw attention to a thief.

Visible burglar alarms and carefully directed security lighting can act as deterrents to burglars.

The most appropriate form of lighting to use is high-efficiency low-energy lighting, controlled by a 'dusk-to-dawn' switch which comes on when it's dark.

Some exterior lights have an infra-red sensor that switches the light on for a few moments when it detects something in its range. Sensors can be bought separately to convert an existing outdoor light into a security one.

Lights should be fitted out of easy reach – at a height of at least 2.5 metres (eight feet). Ensure that lighting does not annoy neighbours or cause light pollution.



Effective security

To assist your decision making about which products to purchase, Secured by Design has identified a range of test standards that indicate products which are more likely to resist common forms of attack and therefore give better protection.

Our home page takes you to information on the standards and details of many of the companies that make products meeting these standards and who support this project.

www.securedbydesign.com

- Further home security information.
- Comprehensive directory of companies manufacturing and supplying Secured by design accredited products.
- Information on Crime Prevention Initiative.

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