

Useful Tips to Safeguard Your Home

How do you keep your home from becoming a target for a criminal? Below are some useful tips to help you safeguard your home:

- **Lock your doors.** Whether you are home or away, you should always lock all doors that are accessible from the exterior of your home. If you have sliding doors that lead to the exterior of your home, place a piece of wood or pipe in the tracking to secure it from opening. **Do not leave your garage door open.** You should only open your garage door for the ingress and egress of your vehicle/s. However, if you are working in the garage and want to open the door for some cool air and light, make sure that you do not leave it unattended and that you are aware of your surroundings.
- **Install additional protection devices.** Home security systems are a great deterrent. However, if it is not within your budget, having a sign posted in your front yard or a sticker on your door can be just as effective.
- **Make a presence.** Do not open the door to strangers but let them know you are there. When a visitor knocks on your door, ask who it is. If you do not know who they are or their intentions, tell them that you are not interested. If they do not leave, let them know that you will contact the police. Keep an eye on them to ensure they leave your property or contact law enforcement immediately. When you do leave your home unoccupied, leave some lights on inside so that it appears that someone is home. You should also leave music playing or the television on. Make it seem like it is being occupied at all times. When you are away for an extended period of time, coordinate with a trusted neighbour to pick up newspapers in the driveway, put your trash cans away and/or empty your mailbox.
- **Keep a clear line of visibility.** Arrange for a landscaper to keep your shrubs and lawn trimmed if necessary. It is important to have clear visibility from your front door and windows to the street. You do not want to have overgrown vegetation blocking your view of outside.
- **Hide your valuables.** Store your jewelry and other luxury items in a safe container (i.e. jewelry box, safe, fake book safe, storage bin) and place out of view. Having your jewelry box on top of your dresser is granting easy access for the criminal to runoff with your “convenient carrying case” of goodies. Keep records of all serial numbers for all of your electronics. If they do not have serial numbers, have your own number engraved or permanently written on them. You should also take a clear photo of yourself with the item. This will make it easier to recover your stolen items that may be sold at pawn shops

The overall goal is to keep criminals off and away from your property. You rely on your home to serve as a safe haven for you and your family. It is important to remember that if you experience an invasion, there is nothing in your home that is more important than your life. Contact your local law enforcement immediately.