



[www.BurglaryPrevention.org](http://www.BurglaryPrevention.org)

# Practical Ways To Burglarproof Your Home

***Burglary Victims Wonder.....  
“Why My House?”***

***Find the Answers Inside***

- **Vacation Checklist**  
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# Introduction

Why me? That's the refrain of burglary victims who want to understand how a thief selected their home as a target over all the other homes in the neighborhood.

The national Burglary prevention Council (BPC), a not-for-profit organization dedicated to the prevention of burglaries, is a leading anti-theft organization and offers information to help keep homes and businesses safe from intruders.

The following pages contain valuable information intended to make your residence a much safer place. All of the items mentioned in the booklet can be found at almost any hardware store, home center or mass merchant.

"For years, security systems were expensive to purchase, operate and maintain," says Art Noparstak, a spokesman for the BPC, "But with advances in technology there is an amazing range of security systems in the price range of the average household."

# Burglars Come In A Number Of Different Varieties!



Some burglars make detailed plans and research their target while others are more spontaneous. Although there are a number of typologies for burglars, following are four examples:

- **Amateur Burglars**— (70 percent of known burglars) are opportunists who look for easy targets. They usually break in on the spur of the moment and go after low risk items such as petty cash boxes.
- **Semi-Professional Burglars**— (28 percent of known burglars) know that the key to success is planning. Often, they strike when you are away from home for the weekend or a long vacation, after having observed your daily routine.
- **Professional Burglars**— (2 percent of known burglars) spend sufficient time planning and strategizing a burglary and they focus on highly valuable goods such as money, jewelry or small weapons. They come in and out of the house quickly and know exactly what they are looking for.
- **Distraction Burglars**— often called 'bogus callers or burglary artifice' primarily target older people. Offenders pose as officials (including police and utility workers) in order to gain access to homes. Once inside the victim is distracted and the burglary is committed.



..... A burglary occurs every 14.6 seconds

# Think like A Burglar And Survey Your Home

To determine how secure your home is, think like a thief. From the outside of your home, consider how difficult it would be to break in.

- Is your door metal or solid wood construction?
- Are all doorframes strong enough and tight enough to prevent forcing or spreading?
- Can the lock mechanism be reached through a mail slot, delivery port or pet entrance doorway?
- Can the front entrance be observed from street or public areas?
- Are exterior entrances or front entrance lighted with a minimum 40-watt bulb?
- Do doorways and windows have a screen or storm door with adequate locks?
- Do any upper floor windows open onto areas, such as roofs, that offer special risk of burglary?
- Are exterior areas of doors and windows free from concealing structure or landscaping?
- Is the outside utility entrance to the garage as secure as required for any ground floor entrance?
- Do you leave windows open at night or when you're away?
- Is your garage door left unlocked, even for short periods?

***...continued on next page***



..... Each year, more than 2 million homes are burglarized.

# Think like A Burglar And Survey Your Home

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(continued)

## Also:

- Your house keys and car keys should not be on the same key ring?
- Do you display valuables to strangers who may have a view into your home through a window?
- Do you talk about vacation plans in public places, such as the beauty shop, shopping mall or car rental office?
- Don't rely too much on your dog. A good guard dog will alert you when an unfamiliar person enters the property. Some professional burglars, however, carry delectable "dog snacks" in their pockets and with a full stomach; some dogs make friends easily and forget guarding the premises.
- Make sure that your home's address is visible for police, firemen and paramedics to easily identify your home but don't post your family name on your mailbox or on you house. A burglar can call directory assistance to get your telephone number and call your home while in front of your house to confirm that you are away.
- Keep all gates in the fence around your house locked at all times. Locked gates (especially tall ones and tall fences) might possibly make it harder for a potential intruder to enter your premises.

If any of these precautions are not currently being taken, then there is a good chance that your home's security could be improved.



# Your Home's Design

**There are several things that you should know about your home's design and how it affects your security.**

- ***Two-story single-family homes***— These homes are usually not a first choice. If the master bedroom (usually his first stop) is on the second floor, a thief could be trapped.
- ***Townhouses***— If you live in a townhouse, reinforce your sliding glass doors. Consider using a motion-sensitive light in order to protect the vulnerable rear area of your residence.
- ***Apartments***— If you live in an apartment building, the most important security precaution is to change your locks immediately after you move in.
- ***Homes in Center of Block***— Homes located in the middle of a block are much more likely to be burglarized than corner homes. If you live in the middle of a block, invest in outdoor lighting that increases your home's visibility and decreases a burglar's chances of success.
- ***Cul-de-sacs***— Police drive through these neighborhoods less frequently than others, and cul-de-sacs often have wooded areas nearby, which create an ideal hiding place for an escaping thief. Homeowners on these types of blocks should ask their local police department for more frequent police patrols.



**Homes without security systems are three times more likely to be broken into.**



# The People In Your Neighborhood

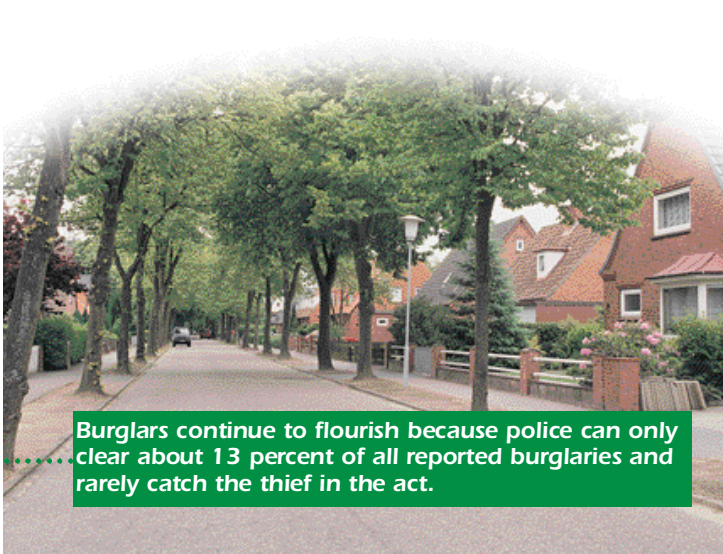
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Just as you performed a security check on your home, perform one on your neighborhood.

## For example:

- Does your street have enough streetlights?
- Does your police department post community alerts about burglaries that have occurred in your area?
- Do you continuously hear unusual noise around the neighborhood?
- Do you see continuous repair operations at a non-business location?
- Do you see slow moving cars going up and down your street?
- Do you see parked cars containing one or more unfamiliar faces, especially at an unusual hour?

If your community doesn't have a **Neighborhood Watch** program, consider establishing one. Also, police departments often have community-policing programs and beat meetings to discuss crime problems. Criminals notice when neighbors look out for each other.



Burglars continue to flourish because police can only clear about 13 percent of all reported burglaries and rarely catch the thief in the act.



# The Ultimate In Burglary Defense: Alarms System And Home Controls



For many, having a home security system provides a level of security that homeowners might not otherwise have.

Government statistics show that around 60 percent of burglaries carried out on homes fitted with burglar alarms are unsuccessful.

There are several types of burglar alarm systems, but the two most popular are Do-It-Yourself (DIY) and professionally monitored.

## Here are some additional benefits of installing a home security system:

- **Homeowners' insurance discount:** Many insurance companies will give you a discount for having a monitored home burglar alarm. Depending on your insurance plan, you could save 10 percent or more. Call your insurance agent to find out what qualifies for a home security discount.
- **Resale value:** Nobody wants to think that their new neighborhood would require a home security system, but having a burglar alarm already in place can increase the value of your home.
- **Peace of mind:** You can rest easy knowing that you and your family are safer because of your home security system. Systems usually allow you to arm doors and windows at night when you go to bed.

## Light Up Your Home



One of the most important aspects of home security is to ensure your property is well lit. If you install adequate landscape lighting, thieves may choose to bypass your home. One of the best options is solar lighting because it requires no electricity, it's easy to install and has no wiring. Each solar light contains a solar collector panel that converts sunlight into energy. The energy recharges high-efficiency batteries that power solar lights at night. Solar is only useful if you have sunny areas. An alternative or complement to solar lights is low voltage lighting. Low voltage lights are extremely safe. There is no special electrical expertise required because most systems require only 12-volts of power to operate. The low voltage transformer reduces regular household electrical current (120-volts) to a harmless 12-volts. Even if one were to touch an exposed low voltage wire or cut a buried cable, there would be no electric shock. Whether solar or low voltage lighting is used, it is important to light entrances, steps, sidewalks, pathways and decks to provide safety and discourage prowlers.

# All About Doors, Locks And Windows

## Securing Your Doors

Most burglars enter via the front, back, or garage doors. The garage door is usually the weakest point of entry followed by the back door. Take a good look at your exterior doors. Do they appear solid and sturdy? Your exterior doors should be constructed of solid wood or metal for the most protection against break-ins. Try inserting a straight pin into the door, if it goes in without much effort, you have a hollow door that can easily be kicked in by burglars.

Use high-quality Grade-1 or Grade-2 locks on exterior doors to resist twisting, prying, and lock-picking attempts. A quality deadbolt lock will have a beveled casing to inhibit the use of channel-lock pliers used to shear off lock cylinder pins. A quality door knob-in-lock set will have a 'dead latch' mechanism to prevent slipping the lock with a shim or credit card.

A screen door or storm door offers additional protection if kept locked.

If you have glass windows on your doors or next to your doors, consider installing a double cylinder deadbolt. This type of deadbolt requires a key to open it from the outside and the inside.

### **Following are other guidelines to consider when evaluating the security of your exterior doors:**

- Avoid leaving gaps around the doorframe, as this provides leverage for removing the door from its frame.
- All exterior hinge doors should be of solid core construction (1" thick if made of wood) or metal clad.
- Locks should be at least 40 inches from door glass, unless the door glass is reinforced. If it's not, a double cylinder deadlock is recommended.
- Only install pet doors that can be surely locked when you are away from your home.
- Try a quality, heavy-duty, deadbolt lock with a one-inch throw bolt.
- Use a heavy-duty, four-screw, strike plate with 3-inch screws to penetrate into a wooden doorframe.
- Use a wide-angle 160° peephole mounted no higher than 58 inches.

# A Closer Look At Sliding Glass Doors And Garage Doors

**Sliding Glass Doors—** Many of these doors can be lifted off their tracks. To prevent lifting, keep the door rollers in good condition and properly adjusted. You can also install anti-lift devices. For maximum security, use vertical bolts. Also place a metal or solid wood rod on the inside track to hold the door closed.

**Garage Doors—** The door that connects your garage to your home should have solid wood or solid-core construction. Secure it with a deadbolt lock. Many burglars are able to pry open a small area of the garage door and pull the string that hangs from the opener to disengage the lock.

## ***Two other tips to consider:***

- Arrive at your garage with your car doors locked. Activate the opener and visually inspect the interior of your garage for intruders from within your locked vehicle before you drive in.
- Close your garage door electronically while remaining in your locked vehicle. Only when the door is fully closed and you are sure that you are alone in the garage should you exit your vehicle and enter your house.



# All About Locks

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Deadbolt locks can help prevent crimes. Deadbolts are commonly installed four inches above the knob-and-key lock on a door. The bolt on these locks is longer than knob-and-key models, which provides more holding power against a burglar who might try to pry the edge of a door away from the jamb.

**There are two types of deadbolt locks on the market, a single and a double cylinder lock:**

- Single cylinder locks are equipped with knobs or levers on the inside of the door on which they're mounted. They allow people on the inside of a home to quickly unlock and exit the structure, if an emergency arises.
- Double cylinder deadbolt locks require a key from both sides of a door. Both models, however, require a key from outside a house.

## An Introduction To Other Types Of Locks:

- Pick-resistant locks are designed to resist lock picks and raking tools, which are common tools used by professional burglars.
- Padlocks are good choices for sheds, workshops and garages.
- For keys, never use ID tags and do not hide them outside your home. A burglar might locate the keys and unlock an outside door to your home.
- Prevent your doors from being kicked in by using U-shaped metal pieces that fit around the lock edge of a door.




**More than 60 Percent of residential burglaries occur during the daytime.**

# Windows Made Easy:

Windows are left unlocked and open at a much higher rate than doors. Windows should have secondary blocking devices to prevent sliding them open from the outside. Inexpensive wooden dowels and sticks work well for horizontal sliding windows and through-the-frame pins work well for vertical sliding windows. For ventilation, block the window open no more than six inches and make sure you can't reach in from the outside and remove the blocking device or reach through and unlock the door. In sleeping rooms, these window-blocking devices should be capable of being removed easily from the inside to comply with firecodes.

- **Ground level window**— Use the same security measures on your windows as you would on your doors. Screens on windows do not guarantee the security of the window. While they may slow a burglar's progress, they are easily cut or removed.
- **Double-hung window**— for these windows that slide up and down, center locks on the corners or mounted on the sides will allow you to secure windows in a partially open position.
- **Casement windows**— Replace the handle catches with keyed locking handles and remove the crank when it is not in use. Keep the key away from the window, but make sure that it's easily accessible in case of an emergency.
- **Louvered windows**— windows that open outward like awnings can be very difficult to secure. Consider replacing them with safer double-hung windows.
- **Burglar bars**— these offer another way to keep thieves out. Attached to windows, they make it almost impossible to enter your home. But remember that this works both ways; bars can keep you inside when you need to get out. Consequently, keep the key near the bars.



Victims collectively lose an estimated \$3.5 billion a year as a result of burglaries.

# A Quick Word About Identity Theft

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Identity theft is a serious crime. People whose identities have been stolen can spend months or years - and their hard-earned money - cleaning up the mess thieves have made of their good name and credit record. In the meantime, victims may lose job opportunities, be refused loans, education, housing or cars, or even get arrested for crimes they didn't commit. Below are ways to protect yourself from becoming an identity theft victim.

- Don't give out personal information on the phone, through the mail or over the Internet unless you've initiated the contact or are sure you know who you're dealing with.
- Don't carry your Social Security card or leave it in an unsecured location around your home.
- Secure personal information in your home, especially if you have roommates.
- Guard your mail and trash from theft. Use a shredder to tear up any mail that contains personal information.
- Carry only the identification information and the number of credit and debit cards that you'll actually need. Put the rest in a safety deposit box.
- Place passwords on your credit card, bank and phone accounts in a safety deposit box.
- Pay attention to your billing cycles. Follow up with creditors if your bills don't arrive on time. A missing bill could mean an identity thief has taken over your account and changed your billing address to cover his tracks.
- Be wary of promotional scams. Identity thieves may use phony offers to get you to give them your personal information.
- When ordering new checks, pick them up at the bank, rather than having them sent to your home mailbox.

..... **Forcible entry accounts for 62.4 percent; unlawful entry comprises 31.2 percent; and attempted forcible entry makes up 6.3 percent of all burglary offenses.**




# Your Possessions

A household inventory can provide a record for insurance purposes and owner identification in case of theft. Several methods can be utilized when developing a room-by-room household inventory, including audio recording, videotaping, photographing, slides and/or a written inventory. Start at one point and go around the room. Don't forget to open closet doors and drawers, and check the attic, basement, garage, and automobile trunks.

## **To make your possessions less attractive, more easily identifiable and harder to sell try these steps:**

- Engrave your initials on valuables. Thieves find it harder to sell marked merchandise. You can borrow an engraving pen free of charge from many police departments.
- Have family members pose with valuables and store the photos in a safety deposit box.
- Do not leave empty boxes on the curb. When you make large purchases, break them down and place them on the bottom of your trash pile on the day of pickup.
- Take an inventory of your possessions, including the item, make, model, color, size, style, features, unique characteristics and serial number.
- All items should be photographed or video taped, and the receipt filed with your log. Attach photographs and appraisals for all items unable to be engraved (i.e., jewelry).
- Make two copies of your inventory, keeping one copy in your home and another in a safe location outside of the home.

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A close-up photograph of a silver and black calculator on the left, with several thick stacks of US dollar bills (including \$100 and \$20 bills) fanned out to the right. The background is a soft-focus pattern of coins.

**July typically accounts for almost 10 percent of the annual burglaries - a time when most Americans plan extended vacations.**



# Your Possessions (continued)

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- Use security stickers. Place stickers on your home that says your home is protected by an alarm.
- Do not put valuables in an obvious spot. Keep inexpensive jewelry in the jewelry box on your dresser and put your irreplaceable pearls in a plain paper box. A thief might take the obvious jewelry box and over look the real one.
- Do not keep your car keys next to the garage. A burglar may use your car to load all of your possessions and escape from the area.

## Possessions you may want to consider marking:

Adding machines  
Answering machines  
Bicycles  
Binoculars  
Cameras  
Car phones  
Car tape decks  
Computers/Printers  
DVDs  
Fishing rods, reels  
Golf clubs  
Guns  
Lawn mowers

Mag wheels  
Microwaves  
Musical instruments  
Outboard motors  
Radios  
Stereo equipment  
Tape recorders  
Tools (hand/power)  
Televisions  
Vacuum cleaners  
VCRs  
Watches

Burglars only need 60 seconds to break into most homes.

# If You Are Burglarized



Unfortunately, despite your best efforts, your home may some day be burglarized. The actions you take from the time you discover the crime until the police arrive are crucial.

## Here are some tips:

- If you return home and find your door or window ajar, go to a neighbor's home and call the police. Do not go in to investigate.
- In the event of a surprise encounter with an intruder, attempt to flee. If you are blocked in, remain still and allow him to leave. Have a cordless phone to take with you for hiding. Do not attempt to detain them, as he or she may be armed. **Your television is replaceable but you're not!**
- While you wait for the police to arrive, don't touch anything or attempt to clean up the mess. You may ruin important evidence or fingerprints.
- Notify the police if you find anything that is not yours that may have been left behind by the burglar such as tools, clothing, etc.
- When the police arrive, provide them with a copy of your inventory, and a complete description of all missing property. Tell the police if you have engraved any of the items with your initials.
- After the police have determined a point of entry, quickly repair any damage, and take proper measures to boost your security. Many thieves break into the same home a second time.

## A Final Review

After you have instituted your new security measure, have them evaluated again. If you performed your security check the first time, ask your local police department to perform it this time.

..... The average loss in a home burglary is more than \$1600.



# Product Overview

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## Protecting Your Home With Intermatic

Fortunately, there are simple, inexpensive solutions to most of your problems. Following are several products, available at mass merchants, hardware stores, home centers and quality electrical wholesalers, that will provide more security in your home:



**Heavy-Duty Timers**— Intermatic manufactures digital, in-wall, lamp and appliances and air conditioner in-door timers as well as electromechanical and digital outdoor timers. All timers are easy to set and include a variety of features. 24 hour 7-day timers are also available.



**Wireless Alarms**— Intermatic offers several do-it-yourself wireless home and personal burglar alarms, including motion sensors, wireless door alarms, window alarms, programmable remotes and a personal alarm that offers complete protection from unauthorized entry or assault. Each product is convenient to use and provides personal safety to homeowners and their families. There are no monthly fees or set-up charges. Alarms are available with a keypad to arm and disarm using a 4 digit personal code and wireless operation.



# Product Overview (continued)

## Protecting Your Home With Intermatic

**Photo Controls**— Keep dark areas of a home illuminated for safety and security. Whether to eliminate potential hiding spots for would-be intruders, or to brighten a porch or driveway for safe entry, photo controls are a convenient product for both indoor and outdoor use. The photocell advanced technology circuit saves 25 percent of energy and reduces light level when ON. Intermatic's power failure light is perfect for emergency situations as well as everyday usage. The light automatically goes on when power goes out, has an automatic night light and is a rechargeable flashlight.



**Home Controls**— The latest technology in home security is home controls. Imagine having a Master Remote Control that gives you the convenience of controlling lights and appliances from wherever you happen to be — your couch, car or even in your bed. Imagine hearing an unexpected noise outside — use the Master Remote Control "all on" feature to quickly turn on your lights and stereo to create the illusion that you are up and about.



## Additional Readings and Credits:

**"Effectiveness of Burglar Alarms"**  
a 2 year study by Simon Hakim and  
Andrew Buck, Temple University.

**Crime Doctor**, Chris E. McGoe

**Federal Trade Commission**

**Federal Bureau of Investigation**

**Personal Security Consultant**,  
Robert Siciliano

**SRI Research Center, Inc.**

**National Sheriffs' Association**



# How They Break In:

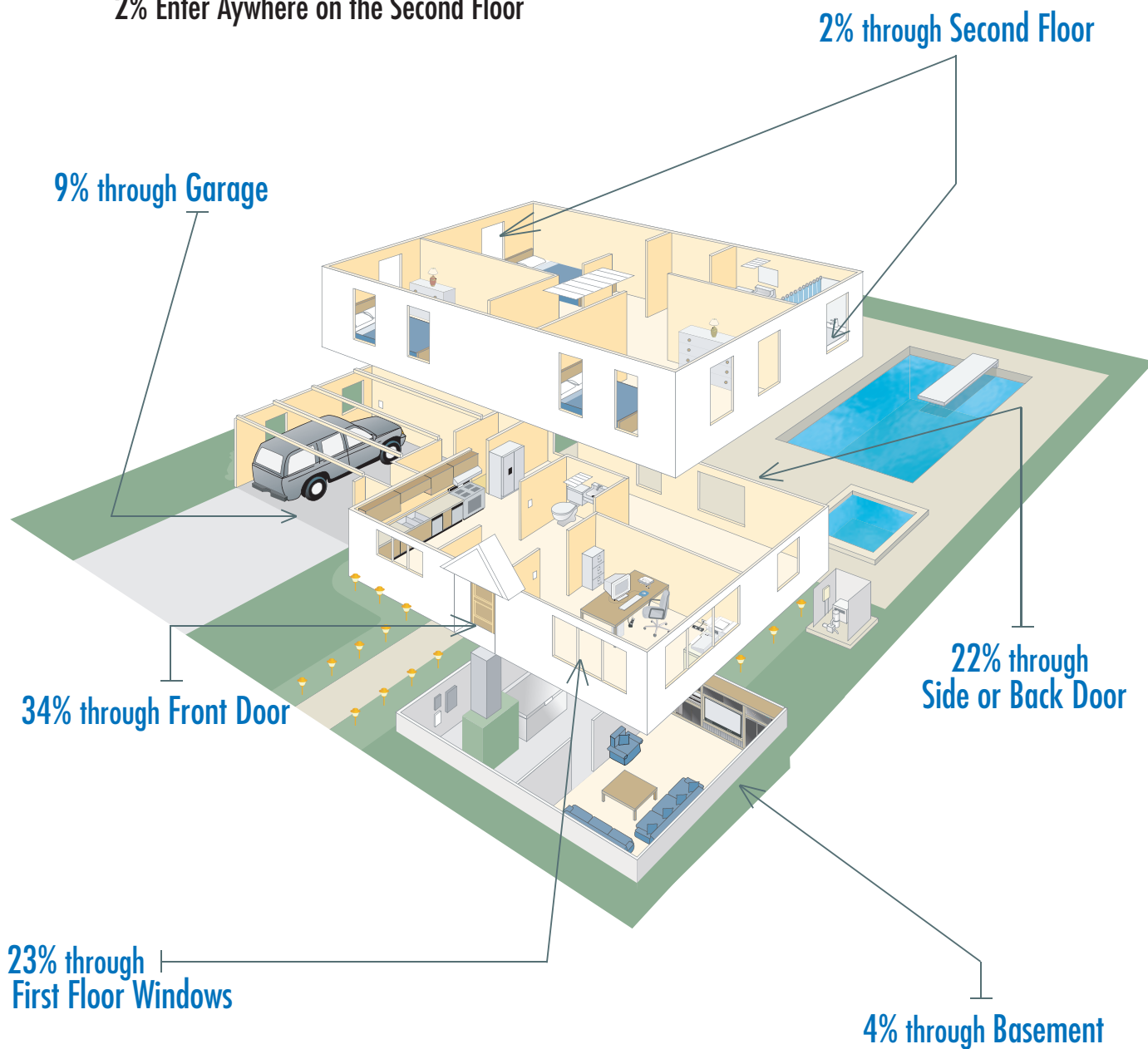
## How They Break In:

81% of Burglars Enter the Home from the First Floor

4% Through an Unlocked Entrance

2% Through a Storage Area

2% Enter Anywhere on the Second Floor



# Vacation Checklist

Vacations provide burglars with plenty of time to enter your home, remove large items and search leisurely for hidden valuables.

If you are planning a vacation, take the following precautions to protect your home while you are away.



Ask police to check your home and patrol your neighborhood more closely while you are away.



Stop mail and newspaper deliveries, or have a trusted neighbor collect them while you are away so that they do not accumulate.



Secure all doors, windows, pet entrances and garage doors.



Transfer valuables to a safety deposit box.



Place timers on indoor lamps to illuminate your home at night, and set timers to turn on radios and televisions randomly during the day.



Check that no bulbs are burned out on your indoor lamps, outdoor lighting fixtures or low voltage lighting system.



Arrange to have your landscaping continue, or your driveways and walks shoveled. A snow-covered driveway without tire tracks or an overgrown yard is an immediate indicator to burglars that nobody is home.



Keep some shades and blinds up and curtains open to maintain a normal appearance.



Have one trusted friend check your home, inside and out, each day.



Remove messages from your telephone answering machine daily so that the “beep” is always short. And don’t indicate on your message that you are on vacation.















Park a car half-way down your driveway to create the illusion that somebody is home as well as inhibit a burglar to use your driveway as a way to better access your property.



Hide garbage cans in the garage or apartment.

# Top Tips to Prevent Burglary

- 1) Keep all doors, windows, pet entrances and garage doors closed and securely fastened. Doors should have deadbolt locks with at least a 1" throw and reinforced strike plate with 3" screws. All windows should have window locks. 
- 2) Secure sliding glass doors. Place a metal rod or piece of plywood in the track and install vertical bolts. 
- 3) When service or delivery people come to your door, ask for ID. If you're still not sure, call the police first and report the stranger. Call the company to confirm. 
- 4) Cut up cartons for TVs, computers, stereos, etc. Tie the pieces together so a burglar going through the garbage does not see any of your highly valuable household items. 
- 5) Do not leave ladders or tools lying around outside. They can assist a possible intruder. 
- 6) Install a wide-angle door viewer (peephole) in your front door so you can see who is at the door. 
- 7) Organize a neighborhood watch program. Neighbors working together make one of the best crime-fighting teams around. 
- 8) Make a home inventory list, complete with photos or video. Store this list in a safety deposit box. 
- 9) Have a security plan in place and talk about it with your family and neighbors. 
- 10) Write down the emergency telephone numbers of the local police and county sheriff's office and the numbers of several nearby neighbors. Keep the numbers by your telephone(s). 
- 11) Don't put your name and residential address on your key ring. If you happen to lose it, a dishonest person could gain entry to your home. 
- 12) Install and test a burglar alarm system. 
- 13) Post signs in conspicuous locations that clearly indicate that the premises are protected by a burglar alarm. 