

# Police Scotland

## Crime Prevention Handbook



**POLICE**  
**SCOTLAND**

Keeping people safe



This publication had been created to help you give advice to members of the public. It contains National Police guidance on crime prevention in various categories.

This handbook is not an exhaustive guide to home security and crime prevention, but it does cover a broad range of subjects and contains up-to-date crime prevention advice.

Please remember to advise the public to get three quotes for any work they have done or security products they buy.

Secured by Design is the national crime prevention initiative operated by the Police Service of the United Kingdom. There is a wealth of information on the Secured by Design website and the website also contains a list of products that have been accredited to Police Preferred Specification. This means that they have the required testing and certification from third-party UKAS accredited bodies in place and you can recommend the use of these products to the public with confidence.

**[www.securedbydesign.com](http://www.securedbydesign.com)**

**Secured by Design**



Official Police Security Initiative



# How do burglars choose a home to target?

**Recent interviews with prolific burglars conducted by researchers at the University of Huddersfield and West Yorkshire Police indicate that burglars target homes that they think will have valuables inside.**

Burglars are very observant and opportunistic; they often look for homes with windows or doors left open or with vulnerable features that they can exploit.

Burglars are aware of the times when someone could be away from their home – no matter how short a time – whether during the day or at night.

Many burglars typically do not want to be seen or heard and if they feel that they would be noticed by a neighbour or passer-by, they are more likely to feel vulnerable and choose somewhere else.

Burglars often choose a home because they know there is a specific vehicle or motorcycle or bicycle they want to steal.

Sheds and garages are often vulnerable as they are not very secure and contain tools with which the burglar can use to assist them to gain entry into a home.

Overgrown bushes and trees make it easier for a burglar to get close to a home unnoticed.

**It is not uncommon for burglars to return to homes that they had burgled once before because the homeowner had not up-rated their security after the first burglary.**

# How do burglars get in?

## Common methods burglars use to break into homes:

Open windows and insecure doors

Fishing for keys through a letterplate, window or even a cat flap

Communal doors left insecure or wedged open

Attacking and snapping euro profile cylinders

Using force on inadequate doors or windows

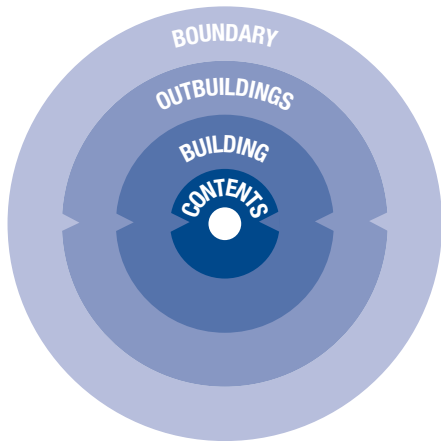
Slipping locks

Remember if your valuables are out of sight and can't be seen they are less likely to be taken

# Conducting a Home Security Survey

The best way to conduct a review of your own home security is to approach it with the mindset of a potential burglar.

This is referred to as the “onion peeling principle” and can be approached by starting with the boundaries and working inwards towards the centre.



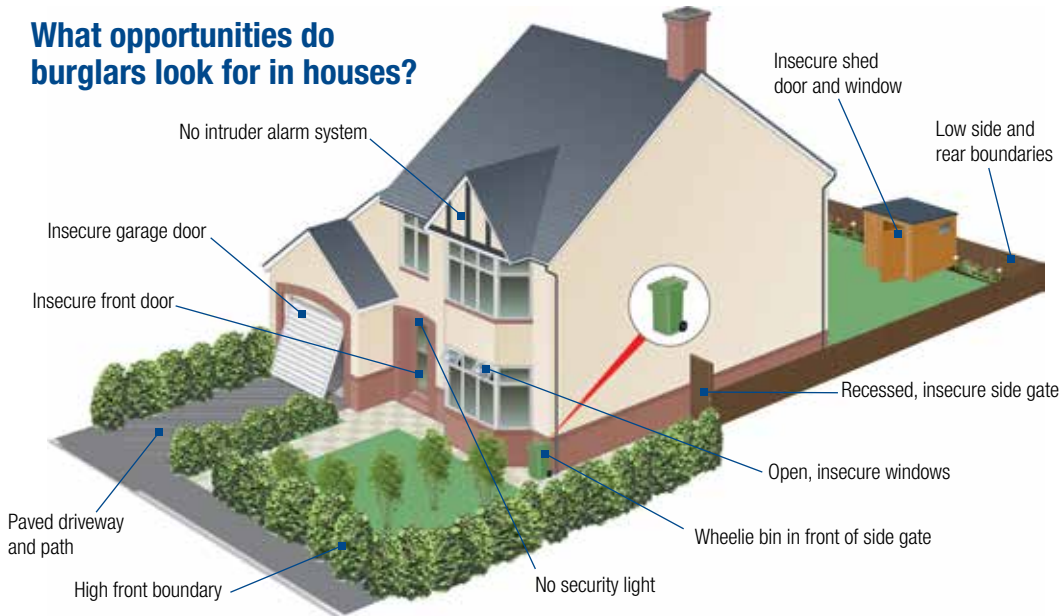
There are 3 key areas where you can be most effective in reducing the likelihood of your home being burgled.

1. **To Deter** – measures you can use to make it harder for a criminal to identify your home as an easy target.
2. **To Delay** – measures you can use to make it more difficult for a criminal to physically break into your home and take away your property.
3. **To Detect** – measures that you can use to help detect if a criminal tries to break into your home or attempts to steal your property.

**Remember most criminals will not target your home if the risk to them of being seen, noticed and getting caught is too great.**

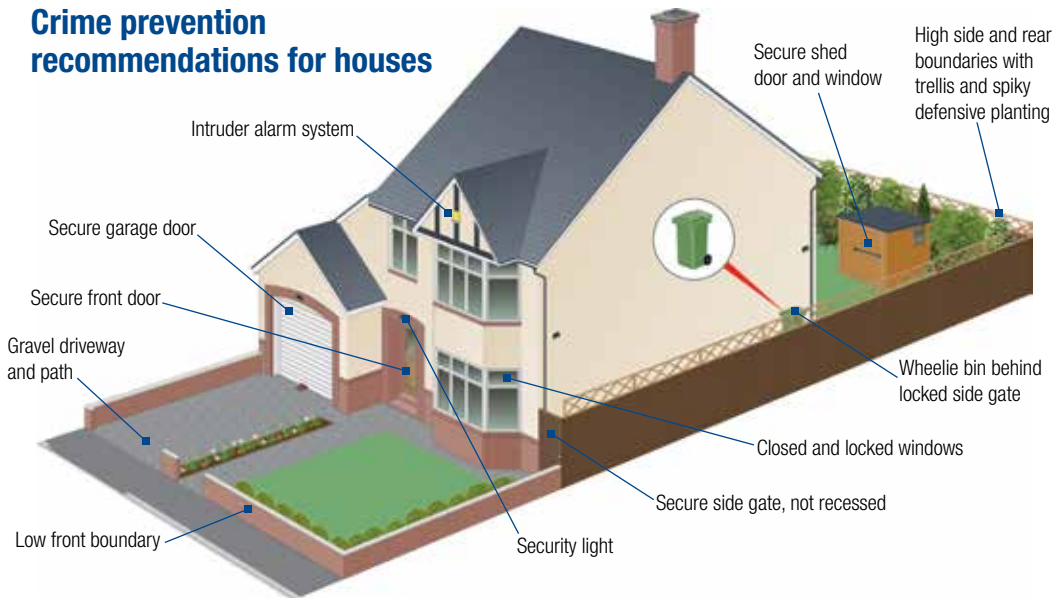
# Securing Houses

## What opportunities do burglars look for in houses?



# Securing Houses

## Crime prevention recommendations for houses



## Boundary

Lower fences at the front of a property (around 1 metre high) are better than high fences as they allow for natural vision over and do not provide cover for someone hiding.

At the rear and sides of a property taller fencing is recommended to prevent easy access. A minimum height of 1.8 metres is advised.

Consider someone climbing over a fence or gate and try to make it difficult for them to do so by adding light trellis, thorny plants or a suitable anti-climb topping such as plastic spikes. Barbed wire or broken glass is not recommended on walls or fences.

Check your boundary fences are in good condition.

Planting along boundaries and fence lines acts as a powerful natural barrier to someone getting in.

Gravel driveways and paths are ideal at preventing a silent approach.

Ensure gates are locked to prevent access to the rear or sides of the property.

Automatic lights can detect movement and deter intruders. See the lighting section for more details.

CCTV can alert you to someone getting inside your boundary if it is monitored, e.g. by being linked to a smart-phone.

Cut vegetation back every spring so it does not obscure someone from view or interfere with lighting or CCTV.

**Remember most criminals will not target your home if the risk to them of being seen, noticed and getting caught is too great.**



## Outbuildings – Sheds and other outbuildings

Internal window grilles

Secure ladders  
and other equipment

Shed alarm



Closed shackle padlock  
on a hasp and staple

**Many criminals target sheds  
and outbuildings to steal tools  
and they use these tools to break  
into your home.**

**Ensure that your contents insurance  
covers the items stored within  
your garage, shed or outbuildings.**

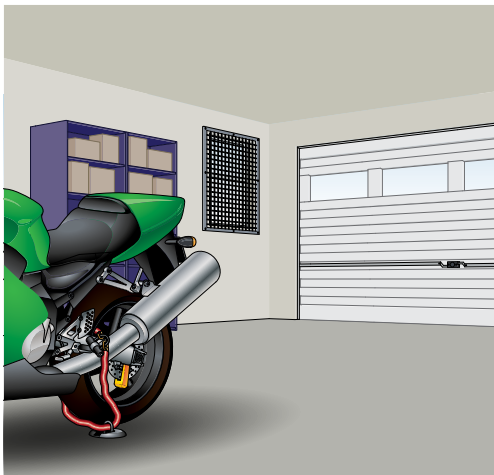
One-way screws  
on hinges

Lock away tools

Ground anchor  
to secure bikes



## Outbuildings – Garages



Remember to secure the window in your garage by screwing it closed or locking it. Alternatively you can place a grill over the window but always think about how you will get out in an emergency.

Garage doors are vulnerable and you can make them more secure by installing additional security, such as padlocks, to provide multiple locking points or using floor-mounted locking T-bars.

If you have an internal door leading to your home directly connected to your garage, ensure this door is solid and robust and secured with an accredited mortise lock and additional security.

Remember if items can be seen from outside they will be vulnerable, so cover up valuable items and tidy away tools. And don't forget that ladders, tools and wheelie bins can be used to break into your home.

Use a ground anchor to secure motorcycles, pedal cycles and other high value items to stop them being easily removed.

Consider extending your burglar alarm to include your garage or outbuildings or use a separate audible alarm system.

Garages are often used as additional storage rather than as the main place to leave a vehicle. By using it as a place to park this can reduce the chances of your vehicle being stolen or damaged.

**Ensure that your contents insurance covers the items stored within your garage, shed or outbuildings**

# Burglar Alarms



Two industry bodies accredit reputable alarm companies: the National Security Inspectorate (NSI) and the Security Systems and Alarms Inspection Board (SSAIB). Consider using a company who belongs to one of these bodies.

There are 3 types of burglar alarm and each vary in capability and cost:

1. **Monitored** – once triggered an alarm company or designated key holder can check to ensure it isn't a false alarm.
2. **Unmonitored** – This type once activated will sound a loud alarm designed to scare off an intruder and alert neighbours, but they are reliant on someone such as a neighbour checking the house.
3. **Auto Dialler** – this type once activated calls pre-programmed key holders using a text or call alert.

The Police will typically respond to a burglar alarm if requested to do so by a monitoring company but are less likely to respond to an unmonitored alarm.

Two visible audible alarm boxes are better than one. Mount them at the front and rear of your home high up to resist tampering.

If you have an extension to your home, remember to extend your burglar alarm to cover that as well.

Signage is an effective deterrent if used with an active alarm system.

Remember to get 3 quotes from 3 accredited companies before you have an alarm installed.

## CCTV

**CCTV can be a valuable tool and may deter some burglars, however it does not prevent a crime from occurring and does have limitations. Most importantly CCTV cannot replace the requirement for good quality physical security.**



Two industry bodies accredit reputable CCTV companies: the National Security Inspectorate (NSI) and the Security Systems and Alarms Inspection Board (SSAIB). Consider using a company who belongs to one of these bodies.

Some cameras work by day and night and record when they detect movement, some can be remotely viewed with a smart-phone device.

Position cameras where they are best able to obtain good quality facial images, could you recognise or identify someone from the footage? Cameras should also be out of reach to prevent tampering.

There is legislation for home CCTV use so always seek advice from an accredited installer first to ensure your system complies with the law. <https://ico.org.uk/for-the-public/cctv/>

Place a sign warning that CCTV is in use.

**Remember to get 3 quotes from 3 accredited companies who can give you appropriate advice before you have CCTV installed.**

## External Lighting

Lighting is a good deterrent and is recommended at entrances and exits as it makes it safer for you coming and going after dark. Ensure it is out of reach to prevent tampering.

Passive Infra Red or PIR lights automatically switch on when they detect movement. However, they are easily activated by animals and genuine visitors and this may not only lower their effectiveness but also cause unnecessary alarm.

Consider instead Dusk till Dawn lights: they switch on automatically between dusk and dawn and can give a constant low white light.

Check to make sure that trees and plants do not obscure your lighting, it is recommended that you cut vegetation back each spring.

**Take care to position these lights so light pollution does not annoy your neighbours.**

## Internal Lighting

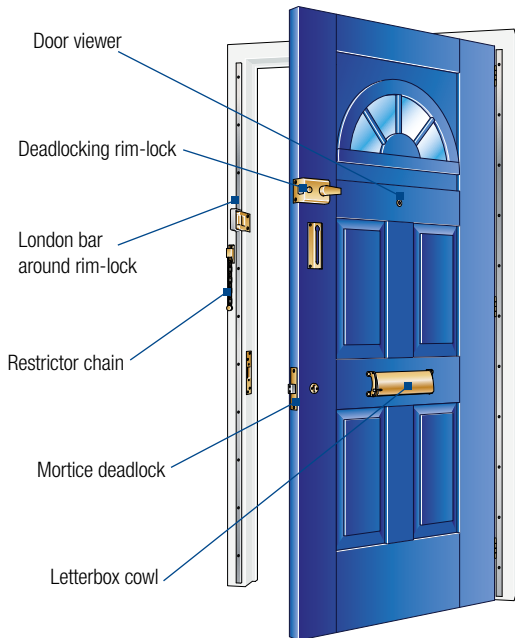
Use an automatic plug-in time switch to operate a lamp or light at pre-set times when you are away. Varying the times of operation is a good way to avoid familiarity. Lighting an upper room on a timer is also an increased deterrent.

Energy saving LED bulbs are best as they do not use as much electricity, last much longer than conventional bulbs and do not generate heat-reducing your fire risk.

In blocks of flats automatic low energy lights that detect movement are recommended for corridors, stairwells and communal areas, such as car parks and cycle stores.



## Doors



**If you are replacing your door always fit a security accredited product to standard PAS24. These are tested to British Standards and are approved by the insurance industry. Secured by Design accredit such products.**

An approved locksmith will check to see if your door is secure and solid timber or of robust composite construction. The locksmith can also reinforce the frame and check if the locks and hinges are British Standard approved.

Ideally the door and frame should be of solid construction with a British Standard mortise lock and an automatic deadlocking rim latch.

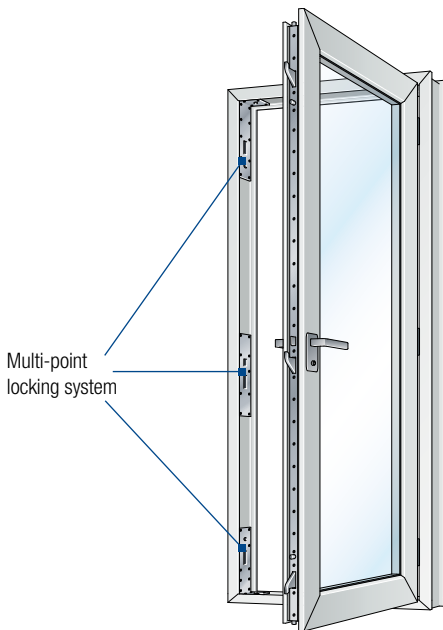
Always remember to use both locks and check to make sure that the mortise lock is engaged every time you leave your home.

If your door has a postbox, a postbox guard fitted to the rear of the door will prevent someone reaching in and opening the door or fishing for any items close by. Consider cat flaps also and position keys and valuables away from the opening in the door.

Modern multi-locking and PVC-U doors use a system of hooks and latches to secure the door but these only work if you lift up the handle and then remember to turn and remove the key.

Glazing can be reinforced by using special film or by installing laminated glass panels.

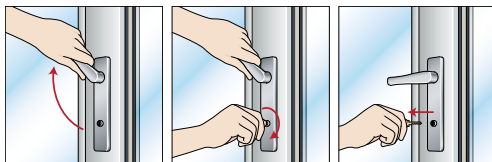
## PVC-U and Sliding Doors



Sliding patio doors are vulnerable to forced entry, therefore check yours has an anti-lift device fitted so they can't be lifted off their runners.

If you have a euro profile lock, inspect the lock from the outside and if it protrudes beyond the frame consider getting an approved locksmith to change the lock to a shorter one that is more resistant to being snapped and is security accredited to British Standards.

Always double-lock PVC-U and multi-point locking doors (lift handle and turn and remove key)



**If you are replacing your door always use a security accredited product to standard PAS24. If you are changing components such as locks, then always use products accredited by Secured by Design. These products are tested to British Standards and are approved by the insurance industry.**

## Windows



**Roof Light**



**Tilt and Turn**



**Sash**



**Casement**



## Windows

Sash stops prevent someone opening the sash window wide enough to climb through.

Key operated locks are recommended for all other window types and any ground floor or accessible windows (unless being used as a means of escape).

Window opening restrictors allow you to ventilate your home but make sure they cannot be disengaged from outside. Laminated glazing or security film is also recommended.

Remember window locks are only effective if used so check that you have locked them before you leave your home or go to bed.

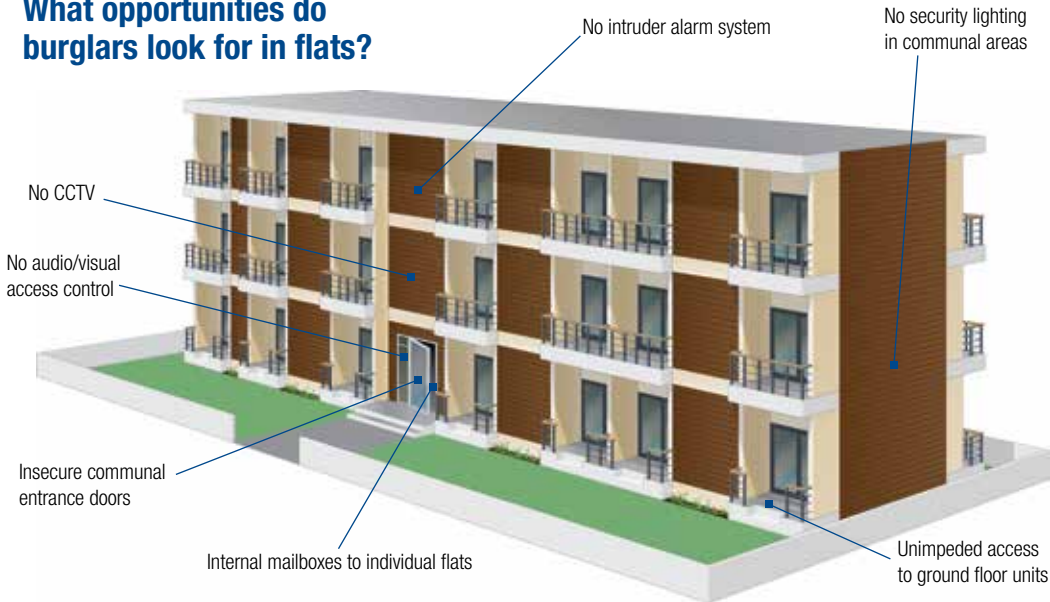
Consider additional security for any windows that could be easily reached by someone climbing from below.

**Always remember to give yourself a means of escape – ensure that you can get out of your home quickly in the event of a fire.**

**If you are replacing your windows always consider a security accredited product to standard PAS24 as these windows are tested to British standards and are insurance approved. Secured by Design accredit such products.**

# Securing Flats

## What opportunities do burglars look for in flats?



# Securing Flats

## Crime prevention recommendations for flats



## Boundary

Check that the managing agent or landlord cuts shrubs and planting back every spring so they do not obscure someone from view or interfere with lighting or CCTV.

If you notice something is not working properly or if a light is out, let the managing agent or landlord know so that it can be fixed right away.

## Outbuildings

Cycle stores and bin stores can attract anti-social behaviour if they are left insecure.

## Building

If you believe the locks on your flat windows and doors are defective contact your landlord or managing agent and ask for them to be replaced.

**Shared blocks of flats and houses of multiple-occupation are more vulnerable to burglary and other crime if the communal doors are not secure. Remember to check that the communal door and other doors are closed and secure behind you.**

Always double-lock PVC-U and multi-point locking doors (lift handle and turn and remove key).

If you live on the ground floor, ensure that your windows are closed and locked every time you leave your flat.

Consider an accredited burglar alarm system.

## Communal Doors



Your communal door is only effective if it is closed and secure so always remember to check that your communal door locks behind you – if it doesn't, report it to your management agent or landlord so it can be repaired quickly.

The ideal communal door will be robust and security accredited, it will be fitted with a good self-closing arm and 2 magnetic locks top and bottom and be linked to the fire alarm and an electronic access control system operated by a key fob.

Communal doors should fail-safe open in the event of a fire and be fitted with a manual override such as an internal thumb turn or push to exit button.

Consider where the postboxes are located as these are often targeted by criminals. Ideally they should be in a secure lobby area and be lockable so that someone cannot easily fish out the mail.

**Always remember to give yourself a means of escape – ensure that you can get out of your home quickly in the event of a fire.**

**If you are replacing your door consider a security accredited product, as these products are tested to British Standards and are approved by the insurance industry. Secured by Design can provide standards for communal doors.**

# Securing Home Contents

Property marking makes it easier for the Police to trace and recover stolen articles and prosecute offenders.

Use a Police approved forensic marking system.

Register your valuables free of charge using one of the accredited suitable property databases.

Take photographs and keep documents, such as receipts, related to your property so you can prove ownership.

There are approved etching products for some property types.

You can also mark your property using a special marker using ultra violet ink or paint.

Seek specialist advice regarding marking antiques.

A home safe is designed to hold small valuables such as passports, credit cards, identification documents and jewellery.

Home safes are insurance rated according to the type and value of the items designed to be placed inside them so check with your insurance company first to ensure you are adequately covered.

Some safes are also approved as fire rated and are ideal for storing valuable documents or computer data inside.

Remember to adequately secure your safe by bolting it to a wall or floor otherwise it can be simply carried away.

Position the safe carefully so it won't be easily discovered but try not to place it in your bedroom as this is the first place a burglar will look.

Remember a home safe is only effective if you actually use it by putting your valuables and documents inside it.



## Contents

Do you have sufficient insurance for your contents and have you checked the small-print of your insurance policy recently?

Remove valuables from open view and consider marking your valuables with an approved product.

Keep handbags away from the postbox or cat flap and hide all keys, including car keys, out of sight (remember a device could be used to hook keys or valuables through the postbox).

Store any high value items (i.e. jewellery, passports) in an insurance accredited or fire rated safe.

In a flat, remember to regularly check and empty your postbox.

## Going Away

If you are going away on holiday try not to advertise this on social media until you return home.

Leave radios or lights in your house on a timer to make the property appear occupied.

Get a trusted neighbour to keep an eye on your property or join a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme.

Ask your neighbour to empty the postbox and collect any deliveries for you.

Make sure that you cancel all regular deliveries, such as newspapers.

Try to get into the habit of completing a set procedure when you lock up your home; in this way you ensure that you don't forget anything.

# Motor Vehicle Crime

## Cars and vans

**This is how you can help protect your car or van:**

- **Leaving items on show is an invitation** – Power leads, SatNavs and mounts, stereo front panels, coins, sunglasses, tools, clothing and bags should be removed from the vehicle or placed out of sight.
- **Keys and ignition fobs should be kept safe and out of sight and reach** – The most common ways to steal a car or van is to take the keys or ignition fob, either when left in the vehicle or from your home through burglary.
- **Always lock and close the windows of your vehicle when unattended** – On the drive, the petrol station forecourt or when parking, an unlocked vehicle is the easiest to steal or steal from. When away from home, consider using a Park Mark approved car park.
- **Fit theft-resistant number plate fittings** – Stolen number plates are commonly used to hide the identity of stolen vehicles. Use one-way clutch head screws to secure plates.
- **Keep electronic keys safe** – Thieves are using scanners to read and copy electronic keys and steal vehicles without the actual key. When not in use keep your electronic key in a security pouch to prevent this.

## Motorcycles

**This is how you can help protect your motorcycle:**

- **Keep your motorcycle in a garage, shed, designated bike store or use a motorcycle cover** – Storing it out of view is one of the best ways to prevent opportunist theft.
- **Fit an alarm, immobiliser, preferably with tracking capability and property mark panels** – Alarms act as a deterrent and trackers and property marking assists in recovery should your motorcycle be stolen.
- **Lock the rear wheel to an immovable object or ground anchor and use a disc lock on the front wheel** – Making your motorcycle less of any easy option will reduce the chances of it being targeted. Combine the use of a disc lock and a chain lock attached to a ground anchor.
- **When possible, keep the lock off the ground** – Whenever you lock and chain the rear wheel, wrap any excess chain around the rear wheel and try to enclose the lock. Keeping the lock off the ground can prevent it being attacked and smashed



## Mopeds



### This is how you can help protect your moped:

- **Chain your moped rear wheel to an immovable object or ground anchor, don't rely on the steering lock** – Standard steering locks are easily defeated and your moped can always be lifted into a van if not secured. Use a disc lock on the front wheel.
- **Fit theft-resistant number plate fittings** – Stolen number plates are commonly used to hide the identity of stolen vehicles. Use one-way clutch head screws to secure plates.
- **Use a moped cover** – Covers are another hassle for an opportunist thief, if they cannot see what moped it is, they are less likely to target it.
- **When possible, keep the lock off the ground** – Whenever you lock and chain the rear wheel, wrap any excess chain around the rear wheel and try to enclose the lock. Keeping the lock off the ground can prevent it being attacked and smashed.

## Pedal cycles



**This is how you can help protect your cycle:**

- **Use a good quality lock, proportionate to the value of your cycle** – Stolen cycles have a good resale value, so protect your cycle with a good quality lock. Quick release wheels and saddles are easily stolen.
- **Store in a garage or substantial locked shed, secured to a strong anchor** – Even when stored inside, chain cycles to a ground or wall anchor. Garden sheds can easily be broken into – see advice on shed security, page 10.
- **Record and register the details and frame number of your cycle and take out cycle insurance** – Large quantities of believed to be stolen cycles are recovered each year, but police are unable to restore cycles or prosecute offenders as the owner cannot be traced. Registering your bike will help should it be stolen.

## Caravans and trailers

**This is how you can help protect your caravan or trailer:**

- **Fit physical security and a caravan cover** – Fit a combination of hitch lock anti-theft device, wheel clamp and ground anchor, a physical barrier to theft is always a clear deterrent. Using a caravan cover and installing an alarm makes any theft more difficult and your caravan less attractive.
- **Register, record and property mark all parts of the caravan or trailer** – Register your caravan or trailer with the Central Registration & Identification Scheme (CRIS) and use overt and covert chips to mark it. If stolen, it may have its number plates, chassis, frame or CRIS numbers removed. Take photos, including specific fittings, marks or damage as these can help to identify your caravan or trailer.
- **Install an alarm and tracking system, including roof marking** – If stolen, being able to track and identify your caravan or trailer is vital. Add clear roof markings, giving the year of manufacture and CRIS number, to assist police identifying your caravan (e.g. 2014 – CRIS SGBS000BYA1234567).

## Plant machinery

**This is how you can help protect your plant machinery:**

- **Remove keys, fit locking mechanisms or anchor to immovable objects** – Even when unattended for a short time, keys should be removed. When left overnight, machinery should be secured in a compound if possible and anti-theft devices fitted, chained to immovable objects or together.
- **Fit immobilisation and tracking systems** – The use of tracking systems can notify the owner the machinery is being interfered with or moved, allowing for a prompt response to either prevent the theft or detain offenders. Anti-theft devices make your plant less attractive to the thief.
- **Maintain accurate records of equipment owned or hired, including serial numbers and registration numbers** – Accurate and detailed records allow for the identification of stolen plant machinery. Without this your mini digger could be any mini digger.

## Goods Vehicles and Lorries

### This is how you can help protect your lorry or commercial vehicle:

- **Lock it, remove it, alarm it** – When leaving your vehicle unattended, first remove valuable items and cash from view, lock it and take the keys with you or leave in a secure drawer or office at work. Overnight, remove tools from vans or if parking up with an empty trailer, leave the doors open. Always set the vehicle alarm and keep fuel tanks locked.
- **Plan journeys, have an itinerary, no hitch hikers** – Have a route planned, including lay-overs, so someone else knows where you are due to be. Where possible use safe lorry parks or park where visible to passing traffic. Avoid insecure locations like remote laybys and quiet industrial estates. Do not pick up strangers as you have no idea what their intentions are.
- **Lock your vehicle and check it** – Even when on the move, making deliveries or refueling, keep your vehicle locked and the keys with you. Before you start off again, visually inspect your vehicle, to see if anything has changed and why that may be.

#### Recommendations

<http://www.thatcham.org/>

Insurance, lock and alarms testing standards

<http://www.secureplate.com/>

Theft resistant number plates

<http://www.cris.co.uk/>

Central Registration & Identification Scheme

<http://www.soldsecure.com/>

Security products testing standard

Check your insurance policy for any further requirements

# Street crime

## Personal Safety

**This is how you can improve your personal safety:**

- **Tell someone where you are going** – Let people know where you are going, who you are meeting and what time you will be home. If you haven't met them before, meet them in a public location. Also consider if you are going to an area with a poor phone reception.
- **Plan** – Use common sense when planning your route and especially if you travel at night. If you are travelling somewhere new, research your journey. Use licensed taxis and mini-cabs.
- **Alcohol can affect your judgement** – Always know your limitations – never leave drinks unattended, don't take drinks from strangers and take care to stay with and look after your friends.

**There is more information available at  
The Suzy Lamplugh Trust [www.suzylamplugh.org/](http://www.suzylamplugh.org/)**

## Street Robbery

**This is how you can help protect yourself from street robbery:**

- **Look confident** – Walk with a purpose and be aware of your surroundings. You are less likely to be targeted if you appear more assertive and less vulnerable. Avoid using distractions such as mobiles and headphones.
- **Plan your route** – If you are travelling somewhere new, research your journey. Keep to busy, well-lit areas which are more likely to be covered by CCTV. Only take licensed taxis and mini-cabs.
- **Keep your mobile phone and valuables out of sight** – If you have to use your mobile phone, be aware of your surroundings at all times. If you are distracted, a phone can easily be snatched away. Consider too what you need to take with you, expensive items may be targeted.

## Bag Theft

**This is how you can help protect yourself from bag theft:**

- **Don't stereotype what a thief looks like** – The most accomplished bag thieves are those who are unseen and they dress to blend in. Be aware of your surroundings and people nearby.
- **Theft tactics** – There are many tactics thieves use for different locations, avoid being distracted and having your attention diverted.
- **Look after your property** – Keep your personal possessions in front of you, in full view and where you have control of them. Never leave your property unattended or exposed, for example hanging on the back of a chair or a pushchair.

## Pickpocketing

**This is how you can help protect yourself from being a victim of pickpocketing:**

- **Don't stereotype what a thief looks like** – The most successful pickpockets are those who are unseen and dress to blend in.
- **Be aware of your surroundings** – Be wary of crowded locations and when on public transport – thieves are afforded cover and proximity in which to strike.
- **Look after your property** – Keep purses and bags closed and secure at all times and place wallets in an inside pocket. Carry bags in front of you or diagonally across your chest, especially in crowded locations.

## Mobile Phones

**This is how you can help protect yourself from mobile theft:**

- **Protect your phone** – Don't leave your phone unattended or out of your sight or on a table. When you have finished with it put it away. Ensure you obtain your phone's IMEI number – this can be obtained by pressing \*#06#. You need this information if the phone is lost or stolen. Use your phone's inbuilt security devices such as SIM locking and PIN locking mechanisms.
- **Record** – Register your phone's details on an accredited mobile phone database. This helps police to identify you as the rightful owner.
- **Tracking** – Consider installing a tracking application on your Smartphone, this could help trace your phone if stolen.

## ATMs and card security

**This is how you can help protect yourself around ATMs:**

- **Be vigilant** – While at an ATM machine, cover your pin and keep an eye on your card at all times. Be aware of who is around you and be suspicious of anyone hanging around the ATM. Thieves employ a wide range of tactics to distract you. When you have left the ATM, put your card away.
- **Look out for devices attached to the ATM machine** – Some devices are more obvious than others. If you do see something suspicious, contact the bank or the premises responsible for the machine.
- **Trust your instincts** – If in doubt, do not use the machine.
- **Be careful with contactless cards** – You can obtain a sleeve or cover that will prevent the electronic card details from being inadvertently read.

### Recommendation

[www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk)

# Stalking, domestic abuse and related offences

## Stalking

### **This is how you can help protect yourself from stalking:**

Stalking is behaviour that is persistent and unwanted by the victim. It could initially appear normal. However, when that behaviour is repeated and causes fear, harassment or anxiety, it is stalking and you do not have to live with it.

There are many forms of stalking, ranging from unwanted attention from somebody seeking a romantic relationship, to violent predatory behaviour. A stalker does not have to be a stranger, the majority of stalkers are known to their victims, such as ex-partners, a friend, neighbour, colleague or an acquaintance.

- If you think you are being stalked, then it is important you seek help, contact the police or get in touch with a support group.
- Gather any evidence you can. Keep a log / diary of all the incidents that have occurred, and record any sightings of the individual.
- Review your personal safety.

#### **National Stalking Helpline:**

[www.stalkinghelpline.co.uk](http://www.stalkinghelpline.co.uk)

0808 802 0300

[advice@stalkinghelpline.org](mailto:advice@stalkinghelpline.org)

#### **Paladin, the National Stalking Advocacy Service:**

[www.paladinservice.co.uk](http://www.paladinservice.co.uk)

#### **Suzy Lamplugh Trust:**

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



## Harassment

### **This is how you can help protect yourself from harassment:**

Harassment is when someone behaves in a way that makes you feel distressed, humiliated or threatened. It could be anyone, someone you know or a stranger.

Harassment can include unwanted phone calls, abuse online, stalking, verbal threats and damaging property.

- Don't engage with the harasser
- Keep a log of incidents
- Photograph any damage or graffiti
- Contact your local police for assistance.

If this happens in the workplace, consider contacting your HR, line manager or union representative.

## Domestic abuse

### **This is how you can help protect yourself from domestic abuse:**

Domestic abuse is the repeated, random and habitual use of intimidation to control a partner within an intimate or family relationship. The abuse can be physical, emotional, psychological, financial or sexual and can occur in any relationship.

Anyone forced to alter their behaviour because they are frightened of their partner's reaction is being abused.

- Recognise this is happening to you. Contact your local domestic abuse support group or the police for assistance.
- Plan in advance how you might respond to different scenarios.
- Consider having an escape route from your address.
- Develop a sign or a code word so that family or friends know when to call for help.
- Keep a charged mobile phone with you at all times.

## Hate Crime

### This is how you can help protect yourself from hate crime:

A hate crime is any criminal offence when the victim or any other person believes it to be motivated by prejudice or hostility towards a person's disability, race, ethnicity, religion, faith or belief, gender identity or sexual orientation.

Hate crimes can include being physically attacked or threatened with violence, receiving offensive letters, emails or text messages, having property interfered with or damaged, or suffering from verbal abuse.

- Recognise it is happening and accept you are not to blame.
- Go somewhere you know is safe and get help.
- Hate crimes start as smaller incidents which may escalate into more serious and frequent attacks, therefore report any incidents.

**Stop Hate UK**  
0800 138 1625  
[www.stopthehate.org.uk](http://www.stopthehate.org.uk)

## Nuisance phone calls

### This is how you can help protect yourself from nuisance phone calls:

Nuisance phone calls come in many different forms. They are an invasion of privacy and may be threatening, abusive or obscene, including heavy breathing or silence. They may be random calls by pranksters or targeted calls by people known or not known to you, who intend to cause upset or intimidation, for revenge, anger or humour.

- Never give personal information out over the phone, do not engage in conversation and hang up immediately.
- Use 1471 to see the caller's number and pass it to your telephone service provider. Use your provider's number blocking service or purchase a call blocker, also register with the Telephone Preference Service for free.
- Do not reply to spam texts, instead forward the spam text to your network operator on 7726 (SPAM on a phone keypad).
- Make sure your number is not visible online and consider going ex-directory. Look carefully at marketing 'opt-in' or 'opt-out' boxes that invite you to receive a company's newsletter and advertising.
- Arrange call screening by using a phone that displays caller ID.

## Fraud

### How to protect yourself from fraud:

- **Be suspicious of all 'too good to be true' offers and deals.** There are no guaranteed get-rich-quick schemes.
- **Do not hand over money or sign anything until you have obtained independent/legal advice and done some research.** Do not feel hurried into taking action or making a decision, however much pressure may be put on you.
- **Never give out your banking or personal details, especially your bank PIN number, to anyone you do not know or trust.** Police, bank staff or other officials will never ask for your bank PIN number or ask you to withdraw money or buy goods to give to them for safe keeping.
- **Do not be embarrassed to report a scam.** As the scammers are cunning and clever, there is no shame in being deceived. By reporting you will make it more difficult for them to deceive others.

**Action Fraud** – [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk)

**Little Book of Big Scams** – <https://www.met.police.uk/globalassets/downloads/fraud/the-little-book-of-big-scams.pdf>

## Distraction burglary

### How to protect yourself from distraction burglary:

- Don't allow unexpected callers into your home. Even if an unannounced visitor has identification and appears trustworthy, do not let them in without checking who they claim to be.
- Always ask for identification and check it before letting somebody into your home. Use the phone number in the phone book or online for the company that they claim to be from, not the one shown on their identity card.
- If you feel threatened or in danger by the presence of a caller ring the police on 999.
- For pre-planned appointments with utility companies, a password scheme can be set up.

## Bogus traders and door to door sales

### How to protect yourself from bogus traders:

- Don't be forced into making a quick decision on the doorstep.
- Do not allow uninvited callers into your home.
- Refuse to be taken to the bank to withdraw money. If you ever feel intimidated by them, close the door and call the Police.

## Cyber crime

### How to protect yourself from online crime:

- Use hard to guess passwords and change them regularly. Have different passwords for different accounts in case one is compromised.
- Install antivirus software on your computer and mobile devices and always update it when prompted. This can stop malicious software infecting your computer or device.
- Don't follow links or open attachments in emails unless they are from a trusted source. Opening links and attachments may allow malicious software to be downloaded on to your computer or device.
- Be wary of emails asking you to input private information such as login details or banking information. The emails may not be from who they say they are and may be trying to trick you in to providing private information.

#### Recommended links

<http://www.met.police.uk/docs/little-book-cyber-scams.pdf>

**GetSafeOnline**

## Online dating

One in three relationships now start online and there are millions of UK users registered with online dating sites. Offenders exploit the anonymity and ease of use of dating websites to make themselves more credible to other users and to create a false persona.

### How to improve your security when online dating:

- Avoid feeling pressured into meeting prematurely in person and be wary of anyone asking for money.
- Create and adhere to a date plan that promotes independence and considers the location, timing, duration of the date and method of transportation.
- Meet and stay in public. Treat the first date as a short screening process.
- Report any offences to the police. This can help to prevent similar offences in future.

## Child safety online

**People online might not be who they say they are and could be dangerous.**

### ■ To keep your child safe you should tell them not to:

- give out personal information, such as name and address, contact numbers, personal photos, bank details, PIN numbers and passwords, to people they only know online.
- supply details for registration without asking for permission and help from you.
- visit chat websites that aren't fully supervised.
- arrange to meet an online friend in person without your knowledge and permission (if you agree to let them, you should always go along with them).
- give any indication of their age or sex in a personal email address or screen name.
- keep anything that worries or upsets them online secret from you.
- respond to unwanted emails or other messages.

- Make use of parental controls on any internet-enabled device by checking with the service provider's website.
- Agree boundaries with your child about what they can and cannot do online.
- Activate safe search settings on search engines.
- Monitor your child's internet use by checking the history folder on your browser as it contains a list of previously visited sites.
- Install and regularly update filtering software to protect against inappropriate internet access.

# Fire and Rescue Services – Request a Home Fire Safety Visit

## How at risk of fire is your home?

Fire and rescue services across England offer a free, home fire safety visit to assess your home and offer bespoke advice on how to make it safer. Where appropriate smoke alarms will be fitted for free in all areas containing a fire risk other than kitchens.

The home fire safety visit is primarily aimed at people regarded as having a higher risk of fire in the home, such as:

- People more likely to have fires, such as smokers, people with mental health conditions affecting memory, and people who've previously had fires or dropped cigarettes onto clothing/furniture
- People with factors that could affect their ability to react, hearing impairment, learning difficulties or some mental health conditions, and those affected by alcohol or drugs (prescription or recreational)
- People with factors affecting their escape such as limited mobility, impaired vision or mental health conditions

Visits are arranged at your convenience.


Note: Home Fire Safety Visits are sometimes referred to as Home Safety Checks or Safe and Well Visits.

**Book your free home fire safety visit**  
**If you are concerned that your home may be at risk of fire, or you know someone who you think needs our help, you can find safety advice and arrange a free home fire safety visit via your local Fire and Rescue Service website.**

# Medical advice

- Make sure you are registered with a local GP.
- If you need medical help, but not urgently, phone 111 for advice.
- In a medical emergency, for example if someone is unconscious or seriously bleeding, call 999 and ask for an ambulance.
- Ensure you know where your local pharmacy and a local 24 hour pharmacy is.
- If you have difficulties with mobility, or sometimes fall when at home, contact your GP.
- Charities such as Age UK can assist the most vulnerable with personal advice, even for complex situations, they can also help with loneliness and can enable independence through their local networks.



The image features a solid yellow background with decorative patterns of lighter yellow squares in the top-left and top-right corners. These squares are arranged in a grid-like pattern that tapers towards the corners, creating a pixelated or mosaic effect.

[www.police.uk/crime-prevention-advice/](http://www.police.uk/crime-prevention-advice/)  
[www.scotland.police.uk](http://www.scotland.police.uk)  
[www.securedbydesign.com](http://www.securedbydesign.com)