

AFTER DARK

Home Security Advice



**POLICE
SCOTLAND**

Keeping people safe

POILEAS ALBA

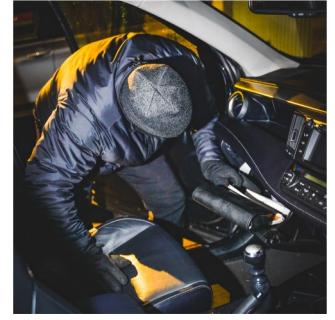
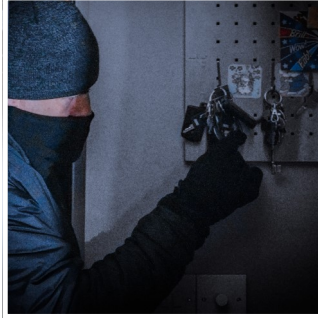
A person wearing a grey cap is shown in profile, looking towards a house at night. The house has several windows that are illuminated from within, creating a warm glow against the dark exterior. The background is filled with dark, silhouetted trees, suggesting a suburban or rural setting. The overall mood is quiet and somewhat somber, reflecting the theme of the text.

Housebreaking can be a traumatic experience.

Although housebreaking can occur at any time of year criminals will often take advantage of darker nights and shorter daylight hours.

Other seasonal considerations include Chinese New Year and religious festivals such as Ramadan and Eid. Homes occupied by families celebrating such festivals can be particularly vulnerable and are often targeted by criminals looking to steal gold, jewellery and cash.

Simple crime prevention measures can greatly reduce the chances of your home being targeted.



Lock the Door

Obvious isn't it? But some people don't do it. Lock the door even if you're only out for a short time. If you have window locks, lock those too. Keep the door locked when you are at home. This stops criminals coming in if you are in another part of the house or garden.

Don't leave your keys on the inside of locks or just inside the door. If you have a spare key, don't leave it under a mat, plant-pot or other easy to spot place at home. Never keep house keys and car keys on the same ring.

Safes and Security Boxes

Don't keep large amounts of gold, jewellery and cash at home. Bedrooms and lofts are routinely searched during housebreakings, particularly if the occupants are celebrating a cultural festival.

Consider storing valuable items at your bank. Private companies offer similar services. If this option is unavailable consider an insurance rated safe. Safes should be securely attached to the solid fabric of the building not just to a plasterboard wall or left sitting on the floor. Ideally get an insurance approved installer to fit a safe in your home.

Lighting and CCTV

House alarms and CCTV are a great visual deterrent. Modern Wi-Fi enabled CCTV systems can be combined with bright LED lighting. Any movement detected outside your home can trigger an alert to a number of mobile devices. If considering CCTV look to cover every aspect of your home. Small discreet cameras can also be used inside. Use signage to advise that CCTV is in use.

When you're away use timers to turn on lights, radios, or TVs to put off unwanted visitors. Smart plugs allow times to be changed even whilst away.

Vehicles

High value cars are particularly vulnerable to theft and criminals will commit a housebreaking to obtain the true key of the vehicle. Where possible park vehicles inside a garage. Secure the keys inside your property out of sight. Avoid leaving them in obvious locations such as the hallway table or kitchen. Never leave valuables in your car.

Keyless Theft or Relay Theft involves criminals using hand held technology to identify whether a parked car has keyless entry. If the car 'key' is close enough the criminals can amplify the signal and send it to a transmitter which acts as the true key and opens the car allowing it to be driven off. Keep keys and fobs well away from doors and windows and purchase a signal blocker wallet to keep them in.

Property Marking and Insurance

There are a number of products you can buy which contain a unique code like DNA. This code is registered to your address. They are usually clear liquids which can be applied onto your possessions.

Check you have adequate insurance cover. Photograph and record your valuables to assist any insurance claim or Police report. This will assist police in identifying any items recovered.

General Maintenance

Never leave anything that can be used by a thief to gain entry lying around the garden. Overgrown bushes prevent neighbours seeing into your garden and allow criminals to go unseen.

Social Media

Consider what you are putting on social media, especially if you are going on holiday or attending weddings, functions or posting pictures with jewellery. Criminals search for this information to create a list of empty houses. Your social media accounts should be set to friends only.

Unusual Activity

Report any unusual activity to Police. Criminals will often call offering to carry out work. This can be used as a method to identify vulnerable targets.



**POLICE
SCOTLAND**

Keeping people safe

POILEAS ALBA

AFTER DARK

When buying security alarms, security lighting, doors or other security products, look for items that have been endorsed by Secured by Design (SBD). The Secured by Design logo and title 'Police Preferred Specification' indicates that a company or a product meets the high standards set by Secured by Design. Find out more at www.securedbydesign.com

For further advice from your local Crime Reduction Officer contact 101.

Police emergency 999
Police non-emergency 101 or
www.scotland.police.uk/contact-us

Trading Standards: 03454040506
Crime Stoppers: 0800 555111