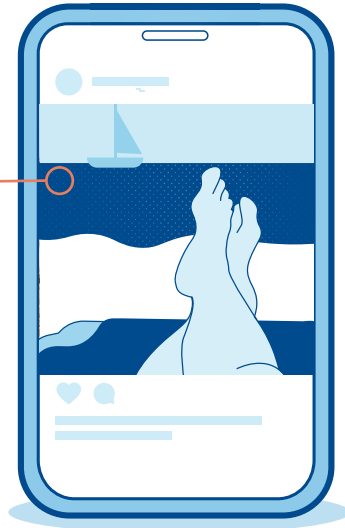


Social Media

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.



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, or at least out of sight from the roadway. 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 handheld 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.

Always Lock Your Vehicle

Items such as phones, money, laptops and tools can be attractive to thieves and are the everyday items that get left on show in vehicles.

Never leave any items of value in your vehicle on leaving it unoccupied.

Remove items of value from the glove box and leave it open to show that it is empty – this includes vehicle registration documentation.

If you are looking to purchase additional physical security for your vehicle consider devices that are Thatcham quality assured or Sold Secure tested (www.thatcham.org) and/or www.soldsecure.com). For further crime prevention advice and products visit www.securedbydesign.com and/or www.securedbydesign.com/guidance/crime-prevention-advice.

DARKER NIGHTS

Housebreaking Prevention Advice



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.

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.

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.

However, careful planting of certain types of foliage can deny access to areas of your garden. Abrasive and thorn covered plants are good positioned near to perimeter fences.

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.

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.

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.