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Keeping people safe

POILEAS ALBA

Property Security



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Perimeter Security

Gates and fences are the first signs of a secure home and act as a good deterrent to intruders. Make sure they are in good repair.

1. Keeping your front gate closed sends a psychological message of privacy, so consider investing in a gate spring.
2. Ensure that side access to the rear garden is secured with a 2 metre high fence and gate. You can fix trellis topping to your fence as it makes climbing difficult.
3. Ensure ladders are put away and bins can't be turned into climbing aids
4. For a perimeter fence by a public path or other vulnerable area consider defensive or prickly shrubbery on your side of the fencing.
5. An outdoor light operated by sensors can be used to make intruders feel vulnerable and observed.
6. Illuminate areas such as the front, side and rear of your home.
7. Make sure passers-by can see the front of your home by cutting your shrubs and bushes to 1m so burglars can't work without being seen.



How to secure your doors

- When buying a new a door it is better to buy a new “door set”, the complete assembled frame and door, certified to British Standard PAS 24-1 ‘Doors of Enhanced Security’.
- If refurbishing a door check that the frame is firmly fixed and sturdy. If it is weak or rotten, replace it.
- Check that the door hinges are sturdy and secured with strong, long screws.
- For added security fit hinge bolts or security hinges. These help to reinforce the hinge side of a door against force and protect the hinge if your door opens outwards.
- If fitting locks to a standard wooden door fit a 5-lever mortise lock plus a night latch or rim lock both tested to BS 3621. These are a minimum insurance requirement.
- If your door is PVCu or Composite then it should be fitted with a Multipoint lock meeting BS 3621.
- Europrofile cylinders used on PVCu and Composite doors should meet TS007 and for additional protection use a security door handle.
- Consider fitting a cage or restrictor on your letterbox to prevent thieves from putting their hands or gadgets through the letterbox.
- If fitting an external letterbox make sure it is tested to TS009:2012 as this covers free standing or surface mounted letterboxes.
- Fit a door viewer so you can identify people before opening the door.
- Door chains can stop callers pushing their way in, but must be securely fixed to avoid screws being pulled out. They will not help secure a locked door against burglary.

How to secure your windows?

Many people focus on securing their doors and forget about their windows and secondary doors in their homes.

- When buying new windows, install windows which are certified to British Standard PAS 24: Enhanced security performance requirements for doorsets and windows in the UK.
- Window locks are essential on ground floors and above flat roofs. They can be retro fitted to many windows.
- Glazing may be protected from being smashed with the addition of accredited adhesive window film.
- Patio doors and conservatories are vulnerable so if not secure install additional locks and security blocks to stop lifting or forced entry.
- When buying patio doors ask for the sliding section to be on the inside and for anti-lift blocks. Multi-locking systems are recommended or have mortise security bolts with removable keys at the top and bottom of both doors.



Secure the Inside of your home

A home that looks empty is more likely to be targeted by a burglar, use automatic timer-switches to turn on a light and perhaps a radio when it goes dark, even for just a couple of hours.

- Take photos of your expensive items and keep copies of them with your insurance policy.
- Think about fitting a small safe.
- For electronic or larger items, use a commercial or forensic marker which identifies the item as yours to increase your chance of getting it back if it's stolen.
- Do not close your curtains during the daytime; this can suggest your home is empty.
- A pile of post on the doormat is a clear sign that you are away. Ask a trusted neighbour to clear your post away, or use Royal Mail's "keepsafe" service; they will keep your mail for up to two months.
- Beware of bogus callers; use your spy hole and a door chain until you have seen their ID and are satisfied you want to let them in.
- Never discuss your security requirements or existing arrangements with a doorstep caller or salesperson.



Secure your Garages and Sheds

Gardens, sheds and garages often have expensive items such as lawn mowers, bikes and tools.

- Check your shed and garage for signs of decay, which may provide an opportunity for a thief.
- Look to strengthen the door and frame, hinges should be secured with coach bolts or non-return screws. Use strong padbars and close shackle padlocks.
- Think of securing the windows with a grills or heavy wire mesh to increase window security and the use of net curtains to deter casual viewing of your property.
- Register expensive items with a commercial database or use a forensic marker to increase your chance of getting it back if it's stolen.
- A ground anchor is a chain or strong point set into the ground to which you can secure valuable items within the shed or garage. Use one which meets Sold Secured Gold standard or Secured by Design.
- To secure an existing garage door buy a garage defender, these bolt into the ground in front of the garage and stop it from being opened until you unlock it and drop it flat. Make sure its Sold Secure silver or gold standard.
- If you have a door connecting the garage to the house make sure this has the same level of security as your front door, fitting locks that meet BS 3621, or fitting a door that meets PAS 24: 2012.

Secure your Bicycle / Motorcycle

- When at home, keep your bike or motorcycle out of sight by storing it securely in a garage or shed using ground anchors or heavy chains with locks tested to Sold Secure Gold or Silver standard.
- When securing your bike remember to secure the frame to the wheels.
- Consider buying a motorbike or bicycle locker/ garage that meets Secured by Design standards.
- If storing the bike outside is unavoidable, ensure you safely locate and anchor items to a secure structure with chain and padlock or bike lock which meet Secured by Design or Sold Secure gold or silver standard.
- Register it with a Secured by Design accredited forensic marking company.



Home Security Intruder Alarm

Home security alarm systems can be used to strengthen physical home security measures. They can be used as a deterrent and a means of summoning help if somebody breaks into your property.

When investing in an intruder alarm it is advisable to have it professionally installed. Do not consider cold callers or telesales inquiries and avoid when it comes to choosing your alarm company. If you have serious doubts about the legality or sales techniques contact the Police or Trading Standards for advice.



There are two main types of alarm systems to consider for your home:

Audible only

- When the alarm is activated it operates an internal and/or external siren to call attention to the property.
- Remotely Monitored System When the alarm is activated it sends a signal to a central monitoring station who in turn will automatically call a key holder of your choice, and if you require it, the Police

If you choose a police response alarm it must be installed and maintained by a company that conforms to the ACPO security systems policy, and whose business is subject to inspection by a UKAS accredited body.

Currently only two such organisations are accepted by the Police. These organisations will give you details of member companies who operate in your local area.

The National Security Inspectorate (NSI)

The Security Systems and Alarm Inspection Board (SSAIB)

Choosing your alarm:

- Check the address and credentials of the company and proof of identity from their representative
- Obtain written quotes from at least two companies
- Ask if they can supply you with a list of police rules for monitored alarmed premises
- Request a written confirmation that they are registered with the Police force in your area
- The company needs to operate a 24-hour call-out service and emergency attendance within four hours
- If the installation of a security system is an insurance requirement, check that the security company is acceptable to your insurer

Operating your home security alarm system:

- Make sure the installer explains the operation of your system
- Read the instructions and ensure you, and those who use the system are familiar with the alarm
- Arrange for a responsible person to hold keys to your home and be able to operate the alarm, if relevant
- Where audible-only systems are installed, neighbours should be aware and encouraged to report any activation that appears to be accompanied by criminal or suspicious activity, such as breaking glass, the sound of a dog barking or suspicious persons hanging around the area etc. Neighbours may choose to contact the police out with any other contributory factors
- False alarms should be investigated and the cause corrected or the system modified
- External sirens and bells should not operate for more than 20 minutes. Excessive noise and frequent false alarms can irritate neighbours and lead to complaints



Domestic CCTV

Frequently asked questions

Q

I have a CCTV system in my premises. Do I need to register with the Police or Information Commissioner?

A

No, From May 2018, and the introduction of General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), residents who use CCTV for domestic purposes ie to monitor their property are exempt from paying a data protection fee under data protection law. This ends the requirement for householders to register their use of CCTV with the Information Commissioner office in these circumstances and to pay the registration fee.

Additional Information is available on www.ico.co.uk

Q

Do I need to display warning signs if I have a security CCTV system on a domestic dwelling?

A

Yes. Signs are now required for domestic security CCTV systems; to comply with the DPA they should contain information about the purpose of the system, the Data owner and their contact details.

Q

What am I allowed to point the cameras at?

A

Anything within the curtilage of your own premises, and your car parked on the street. You should try not to be viewing adjoining properties or premises opposite.

