

## Home Security Precautions

- 1.** Ensure your windows and doors are shut and locked. One in five burglars don't use force and one in three enter through a back window.
- 2.** If you are replacing your windows, consider specifying laminated glass. Ensure that there are no external glazing beads. Fasteners and stays should be key lockable.
- 3.** Use time switches, which are available from DIY stores, to turn lights and radios on/off when you are out or away.
- 4.** Don't tempt thieves. Keep valuable possessions locked away and out of sight.
- 5.** Get a friend or neighbour to look after your home when you are away by collecting the mail, drawing curtains and generally making the place look lived in.
- 6.** A burglar alarm is a very good deterrent. There is a wide range of products available from 'wire-free' systems to professionally installed systems.
- 7.** Never leave a spare key in a convenient hiding place, such as under the doormat or in a flower pot. These are places thieves will look first.
- 8.** When moving into a new property always change the door locks and any alarm security codes.
- 9.** Fit a strong, lockable, high gate across the alleyway to stop a thief getting to the back of your property, where they can work undisturbed. If you share an alleyway with a neighbour, ask their permission and for help with the cost.
- 10.** Always lock garages and garden sheds, especially if you store ladders in them. If your ladders are stored outside, make sure they are chained or securely fixed to a wall or fence.
- 11.** Make sure all external doors and frames are in good condition. External doors should be made of solid core construction at least 44mm thick.
- 12.** Replace glass panels around the door with laminated glass.
- 13.** Fit and use five lever mortice deadlocks, in accordance with BS3621, to front and back doors.
- 14.** Get specialist advice on fitting locks to patio doors.
- 15.** If you have French doors, fit a security mortice lock and mortice bolts to the top and bottom of each door.
- 16.** Make sure all replacement doors and windows come with good built-in locks.
- 17.** Fit a door chain to the front door, to use when answering the door to strangers. Always put the chain on the door prior to opening. But never leave it on the door as this could prevent family or neighbours entering the property in an emergency.
- 18.** Fit a door viewer to identify callers before opening the door.
- 19.** Check door hinges are sturdy and strong, with long screws.
- 20.** Never hang a spare key inside the letterbox, as thieves will check for this. Fit a letterbox cage to prevent thieves putting their hands through the letterbox and trying the lock from the inside.

- 21.** Mark your property with a UV pen or indelible marker, showing your postcode and house number. Ask at your local police station for 'post-coded property' stickers to display in your front and back windows.
- 22.** When answering the front door, ensure that the back door is locked. Then put the door chain on, before opening the door. If the caller is not known to you, ask to see some form of identification (ID), preferably a photo ID card. Ask the caller to hand you the ID. Study it carefully to establish if it is genuine, and the photograph resembles the caller. If in doubt, check the ID for a company or organisation telephone number. Ask the caller to wait while you contact the company to confirm that the caller is employed by them.
- 23.** Always be cautious of cold calling builders and tradesmen. Good professional tradesmen are normally too busy to tout for work.

**For further help and advice, please call 0845 60 61 331.**