



## **\* TIPS ON HOME SAFETY \***

### CLEAR SHRUBS AND HIDING PLACES AWAY FROM WINDOWS AND DOORS

Homes that are landscaped into obscurity are the easiest to break into. Entrances obscured by a hedge or lattice also provides a perfect workplace for burglars. Not only is the thief hidden, but also a lattice often serves as a staircase to a second-floor window.

### USE ONLY "SEE-THROUGH" FENCE

A thick hedge or solid fence is an open invitation to burglars. Once inside, they can't be seen from the street. But it's difficult to hide behind chain link.

### LIGHT YOUR PROPERTY AT NIGHT

Burglars prefer to work in the dark. Leave porch and garage lights on while you sleep. Also consider installing motion-detector lights if you live in a high-crime area or near a highway. Burglars strike 40 percent more often within three blocks of major thoroughfares, which offer easy escape.

### GET TIME ON YOUR SIDE

Burglars usually leave if they can't break in within ninety seconds. Anything that slows down a thief by even a minute or two can keep your house from being robbed.

### KEEP ALL DOORS LOCKED

Keep doors locked even when you are home. A locked screen or storm door is another delay. Be sure to lock garage doors and those between the house and garage too.

### LOCK ALL WINDOWS

An open second-floor window makes your home as vulnerable as an unlocked front door.

### LOCK UP YOUR LADDERS

Keep ladders locked in garages and tool sheds. Never leave them leaned or stored against the house.

### DON'T HIDE AN EXTRA KEY

The first thing a burglar looks for is a hidden key, and is well acquainted with the hiding places. If you insist on hiding a key, never hide it anywhere near the entrance. More important, never leave a revealing note on the door. Few burglars are illiterate, and the consequences can be devastating.

### REINFORCE ALL ENTRANCES

Install deadbolt locks that go at least one and a half inches into the doorframe. But, be careful where you buy them. Locksmiths have all the best locks, and they know how to properly install them. Metal or solid-core hardwood doors are the best prevention against kick-ins, one of the most common methods burglars use to get in. Remember that glass panels in back doors can be smashed in easily. Burglars then simply reach in and unlock the door. Sliding glass doors can be smashed as well.

The solution:

Use Plexiglas instead of glass. After failing to enter ones home, a burglar decided to smash the glass patio door. He threw a brick at it. When the brick bounced off without even cracking the glass, he gave up. Sliding doors should also have a locking metal rod that blocks the track so they won't slide open.

### PROTECT PRIZED POSSESSIONS

#### **DON'T LEAVE MONEY AROUND THE HOUSE!**

Cash is what burglars are most eager to steal. If you must keep cash on hand, choose your hiding places carefully.

The first place a burglar will usually look is in the master bedroom—In jewelry boxes, lingerie drawers, between mattresses, in boxes in closets.

Other places burglars look: in refrigerators and freezers, desks, hutches, silverware cases and cookie jars.

### KEEP PHOTOGRAPHS AND LISTS OF VALUABLES

ID numbers engraved on costly items will not stop burglars from stealing them, but it is wise to keep a list, including serial numbers of appliances and electronic gear, so the police can track them if stolen. It is suggested that ID numbers, if used, be the owner's driver's license number, rather than a social security number, so as to facilitate location of the owner.

Visual inventories, such as room-to-room photographs or videos can make it easier to collect an insurance claim.

The items most stolen are: Camcorders, firearms, cameras, jewelry, silver, paintings, bearer bonds, credit cards, bankbooks, checks, electronic devices, & even piggy banks.

### DON'T CALL ATTENTION TO NEW PURCHASES

Cut up boxes from costly purchases, such as computers and VCR's and dispose of them in trash bags to avoid alerting thieves to new valuables.

### PUT KEYS AWAY

Key boards are convenient for homeowners, but they're convenient for burglars too. Clearly marked keys for vehicles and locked cabinets can target these items for theft.

### DON'T ADVERTISE YOUR ABSENCE

#### **DON'T STOP YOUR MAIL OR NEWSPAPER DELIVERY!**

Burglars often know the people who handle these services and can find out when you're leaving. Ask friends or neighbors to pick up your mail and papers instead. Never allow them to pile up.

### DON'T ANNOUNCE TRAVEL PLANS ON A ANSWERING MACHINE

Burglars can phone a home first to make sure no one is there. Some people have left "on vacation" messages on their machines.

### TELL YOUR NEIGHBORS YOUR PLANS

Tell your neighbors if you are going out of town, so they can watch your house.

### MAKE THIEVES THINK YOU ARE AT HOME

Leave drapes and window shades open while you're away. It not only deters burglars, but also allows neighbors to see what's happening inside your house. Leave lights on or hook them up to timers. You can also use the phone company's "call forwarding" service. While you're away, your phone rings through to a friend or neighbors who answers it. That way, the caller can't tell you're not home.

### ALWAYS CHECK TO SEE WHO'S KNOCKING BEFORE OPENING THE DOOR

Use the peephole or look out the window. Never unlock the door to talk to someone asking for help. Offer to call for them. Remember, you are removing the only barrier you have between you and a potential attacker. Always check the ID of service personnel.

### MISCELLANEOUS SAFETY TIPS

Use your first initial and last name on your mailbox and telephone listing. When returning home, have your door key in your hand. If you return home and suspect someone has been or is still in your home,

don't go in, call the Police. If you see a suspicious person or suspect a prowler to be in your yard, call Police. Report any unusual activity in your neighborhood.

**Learn to detect and properly report criminal activity.  
The number for Baton Rouge Police Complaint desk is:**

**To report a crime - 389-2000**

**To report an emergency - 911**

Addresses for the police districts:

**1<sup>ST</sup> DISTRICT: 4445 PLANK ROAD**  
**2<sup>ND</sup> DISTRICT: 2265 HIGHLAND ROAD**  
**3<sup>RD</sup> DISTRICT: 11010 COURSEY BLVD**  
**4<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT: 8227 SCENIC HIGHWAY**