

Kent[®] Security Services

Lock up your home, even if you go out only for a short time. Many burglars just walk in through an unlocked door or window.

- For the most effective alarm system, conceal all wiring. A professional burglar looks for places where he or she can disconnect the security system.
- Your house should appear occupied at all times. Use timers to switch lights and radios on and off when you're not at home.
- If you have a faulty alarm that frequently goes off, get it fixed immediately and tell your neighbors that it's been repaired. Many people ignore an alarm that goes off periodically.
- A spring-latch lock is easy prey for burglars who are "loiding" experts. Loiding is the method of slipping a plastic credit card against the latch tongue to depress it and unlock the door. A deadbolt defies any such attack. It is only vulnerable when there is enough space between the door and its frame to allow an intruder to use power tools or a hacksaw.
- If you lose your keys, change the locks immediately.
- Before turning your house key over to a professional house cleaner for several hours, make sure the person is honest and reputable as well as hardworking. Check all references thoroughly. If the house cleaner is from a firm, call your local Better Business Bureau to check on the firm's reputation.
- Instead of keeping a spare key in a mailbox, under the doormat, or on a nail behind the garage, wrap the key in foil -- or put it in a 35mm film can -- and bury it where you can easily find it if you need it.
- Don't leave notes for service people or family members on the door. These act as a welcome mat for a burglar.
- If the entrances to your home are dark, consider installing lighting with an infrared detector. Most thieves don't want to be observed trying to get in a door.
- Talk to your neighbors, property management, and security about any suspicious people or strange cars you notice lurking about.
- To keep your tools from being stolen, paint the handles. Thieves avoid items that are easy to identify.
- Trees located near windows or shrubbery that might shield a burglar from view can be major flaws in your home-protection plan. Consider your landscaping plan in light of your protection needs.
- Do not list your full name on your mailbox or your entry in the telephone book. Use only your initial and your last name.

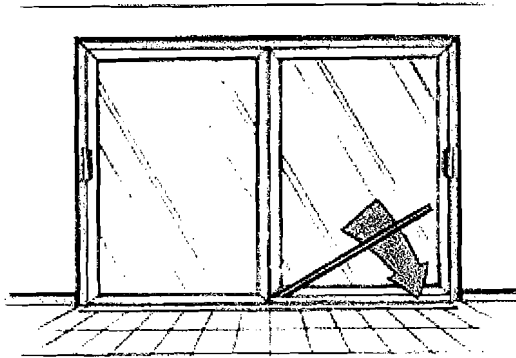
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- If someone comes to your door asking to use the phone to call a mechanic or the police, keep the door locked and make the call yourself.

Securing Doors

- To help burglar-proof your home, install 1-inch throw deadbolt locks on all exterior doors.
- A door with too much space between the door and the frame is an invitation for the burglar to use a jimmy. Reinforce the door with a panel of 3/4-inch plywood or a piece of sheet metal.
- If there are door hinges on the outside of your house, take down the door and reset the hinges inside. Otherwise all a thief has to do to gain entry to your home is knock out the hinge pin.
- You can burglar-proof your glass patio doors by setting a pipe or metal bar in the middle bottom track of the door slide. The pipe should be the same length as the track.



- It's easy for a burglar to pry through rot. Replace rotted door frames with new, solid wood.
- It's simple for a thief to break glass panels and then reach in and open a doorknob from the inside. A door with glass panels should be either fortified, replaced, or secured with deadbolts that can only be opened with a key.

Securing Windows

- Protect your windows with one or more good locks, an alarm system, burglar-resistant glass, or many small panes instead of one large area of glass.
- When installing a window lock, drip some solder on the screw heads. It will stop a burglar from unscrewing the lock after cutting a small hole in the windowpane.

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Garage Security

Garages present special challenges for security. Here are some tips for keeping your garage secure.

- If you frost or cover your garage windows, burglars won't be able to tell if your car is gone.
- Keep your garage door closed and locked even when your car is not in the garage.
- Install a peephole in the door separating the house from the garage. If you hear suspicious sounds, you can check without opening the door.
- Are you worried about someone entering your house through your attached garage? If the garage door lifts on a track, a C-clamp can provide extra security since the door cannot be opened if you tighten the C-clamp on the track next to the roller.

Home Security When You're Away

Burglars always look for signs that a house is uninhabited -- and the longer the house is empty, the more vulnerable it becomes. Follow these tips for keeping your house secure while you're away:

- If your plans to be away from home have been publicized through a funeral, wedding, or similar newspaper notice, hire a house sitter. Burglars often read the newspapers to see who's planning to be away from home all day or for several days.
- Ask your neighbors to use your garbage cans when you're on vacation so your absence won't be so evident.
- If you're going to be away from home for several days -- or even for just one day -- adjust your telephone ring to its lowest volume. An unanswered phone is a quick tip that your home is empty.

We've covered home security -- when you're there or when you're away. Now you can rest easier no matter where you are.

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