



# ***Maintaining the Home***

## ***Burglary Protection***

# ***Maintaining the Home: Burglary Protection***

---

The National Crime Prevention Council offers this advice to keep your property and family protected:

## **Check Your Locks**

Door and window locks in most homes today might keep out someone who just rattles the knob, but they won't stop a determined or professional burglar. In more than 40 percent of residential burglaries, the thieves came in an unlocked door or window.

Every exterior door should have a dead-bolt lock with a one-inch throw. If you have a key-in-the-knob lock, install an auxiliary lock—a vertical bolt, cylinder deadbolt, or horizontal-bolt model. And if you just moved into a new house or apartment, rekey the locks. You never know who may still have old keys. Also, do not hide your keys in mailboxes, planters or under doormats. Give a duplicate key to a trusted neighbor instead.

Secure sliding glass doors with commercially available locks, with a rigid wooden dowel in the track or with a nail inserted through a hole drilled in the sliding door frame and projecting into the fixed frame. Lock double-hung windows with window key locks. Double-hung windows also can be locked by sliding a bolt or nail through a hole drilled at a downward angle in each top corner or the inside sash and part way through the outside sash. Consider grilles for basement or street-level windows if you live in a high-crime area.

## **Check Your Doors**

Locks lose their effectiveness if they are installed in flimsy or weak doors. Make sure outside doors are solid, at least 1 3/4 inch metal or hard wood. Doors should fit tightly in their frames and hinges should be on the inside. Double check the door between your house and the garage since that is a common entry spot for thieves.

Install a peephole or wide-angle viewer in all entry doors so you can see who is outside without opening the door. A short chain between the doors and the jamb is not a good substitute because it can be broken easily.

## **Look at Your Home from the Outside**

To discourage burglars from selecting your home, make sure that any shrubbery around doors and windows is pruned so they will not hide anyone tampering with the entry points. Cut back tree limbs that could help a thief climb into second story windows.

Keep your yard well maintained and store ladders and tools inside your garage or basement when you're not using them. All entrances and porches should be well lit.

## **Consider an Alarm System**

If you live in an isolated area or in a neighborhood vulnerable to break-ins, explore the costs of an alarm system. The simplest in-house alarm system sets up a small electrical circuit across door locks and from window to frame.

When this current is interrupted by someone opening the door or window, the alarm sounds. More sophisticated systems include sensing devices that set off a siren when an intruder disturbs a field of continually moving sound or radar waves. Advanced alarm systems can be monitored by a central station, which alerts the police if a thief breaks in. These systems can include smoke/fire alarms and help or panic buttons to signal a medical or other emergency as well.

### **Have a Family Plan**

Remember that your goal is to avoid any confrontations with a burglar since there is a good chance he or she is armed. If you find a door ajar, a screen slit or a window broken when you come home—do not go inside. Call the police from a neighbor's house.

### **Prepare When You Leave Town**

Notify a trusted neighbor that has a view of your house of your vacation schedule and ask him or her to pick up your mail, deliveries and newspapers. Put lights and a radio on timers to create the illusion that someone is home. Leave shades, blinds and curtains in normal positions and arrange to have your lawn and garden maintained if you will be gone a long time. In winter, ask your neighbor to remove snow from your sidewalk and driveway and to leave footprints around your home to make it look like someone is around.

For a small investment of time and money, you can greatly reduce your chances of being a victim of home burglary. For more information on home security and safety, contact your local police or sheriff's department.

This material was adapted from publications produced by the National Association of Home Builders. NAHB information can be found on the Web at <http://www.nahb.org>.

*This resource is one in a series on **Maintaining the Home** which include:*

---

### **Interior Maintenance**

Preventive Home Maintenance Checkup  
Make a Basic Toolkit for Simple Home Repairs  
Selection and Use of Home Cleaning Products  
Discovering the Secrets of Successful Storage

### **Heating**

Furnace Care  
Fireplace and Chimney Care

### **Cooling**

Evaporative Cooler  
Air Conditioner  
Ceiling Fans

### **Plumbing**

Fixing Plugged Sink Drains  
How to Unclog a Toilet  
Repairing Dripping Faucets

### **Electrical**

How to Set or Reset a Circuit Breaker  
How to Replace a Fuse

### **Appliances**

How to Buy an Energy Efficient Home Appliance  
Choosing a Water Heater

### **Maintenance:**

Dishwasher Care and Dishwasher Cleaning  
Dryer Care and Dryer Cleaning  
Freezer Care and Freezer Cleaning  
Garbage Disposal Care and Cleaning  
Range and Oven Care and Range Cleaning  
Refrigerator Care and Refrigerator Cleaning  
Small Electrical Appliance Care and Cleaning  
Washer Care and Cleaning

### **Flooring**

Buying new carpet  
Carpet Care and Cleaning  
Wood Floors Care and Cleaning  
Ceramic Tile Floors Care and Cleaning  
Vinyl Floor Coverings Care and Cleaning

### **Walls**

Selecting and Applying Paint  
Wallpaper Selection and Cleaning  
Repairing Walls

### **Furniture**

Furnishing Your New Home: Color and Design  
Selecting Fabric For Home Furnishings

### **Exterior Maintenance**

#### **Home Exterior**

Foundations, Basements and Yards  
Exterior Walls, Windows, and Doors

#### **Roof**

A Guide To Roofs  
Roof Maintenance

#### **Landscaping and Lawn Care**

Principles of Xeriscape  
Watering Your Lawn

### **Home Safety**

Child-Proofing Your Home  
Is Your Home Safe From Fire Hazards?  
Smoke Alarms Save Lives  
Carbon Monoxide Alarms  
Are Your Children Safe From Poisons?  
Protecting Yourself Against Burglary

---

### **Maintaining the Home: Burglary Protection**

---

## **Conservation**

Weatherize Your Home  
Easy Tips to Save Money and the Planet  
How to Stop Air Leaks Around Windows  
Energy-Efficient Heating and Cooling  
Indoor Water Conservation Tips  
Outdoor Water Conservation Tips

## **Environment Issues**

Green Building  
Reduce-Reuse-Recycle: Alternatives for Waste Management  
Create a home recycling center  
Healthy Indoor Air for New Mexico Homes  
Dealing with Mold  
Household Hazardous Waste  
Hazardous Household Substances: Alternatives That Are Relatively Free of Toxic Effects  
Radon

## **Pest Control**

Cockroaches and Their Control  
Southwest Insects

## **Accessible Living**

Update your home for a lifetime of living  
Vision Loss & Hearing Loss  
Hand Dexterity, Strength and Range of Motion  
Cognitive Difficulties  
Mobility Impairments, Balance and Coordination

---

Sponsored by New Mexico State University and the City of Las Cruces. Supported by U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. New Mexico State University is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer and educator. NMSU and the U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. © 2005 NMSU Board of Regents. All rights reserved.



## **Maintaining the Home: Burglary Protection**