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HOME BURGLARY PREVENTION TIPS

No home or neighborhood is immune, but these relatively easy precautions, when performed jointly, will deter most home burglars.

Don't leave a "hidden key" outside under doormat, flowerpot, drain spout, etc.

Don't grow hiding places by allowing windows/side bushes to grow too large.

Don't allow valuables (purse, VCR, etc.) to be visible from the street or within arm's reach from outside window.

Don't allow strangers (male or female) in who act as though they are lost, request a drink of water, or to use the phone.

Don't display your name on mailbox. A thief needs only a phone book to determine who answers and who is gone.

Don't leave a ladder outside.

Don't simply leave all lights on when you're gone...a dead giveaway. Use timers or have a neighbor assist.

Don't allow papers or mail to stack up in drive.

Don't rely on clamshell window locks. They're uneven, don't fit, and easily jimmied with a knife.

Don't leave valuables in the obvious places: nightstands, chest of drawers, desks, closets, family room. Be creative...

Don't buy items off the street from someone whose character you can't vouch for. You could be receiving stolen property and adding to the burglary problem.

Don't deliberately confront a burglar. There may be more than one; they may be on drugs, and you might frighten them into a confrontation when most go great lengths to avoid conflict.

Do watch your neighbor's property and notes suspicious persons and vehicles. Notify the Police (862-8600) and give a description: location, number of suspects, race age, clothing, vehicle description, and tag number.

Do strengthen all doors and doors locks—solid core or metal quality dead bolts, little or no glass, and door jam should be as solid as the door. Consider that two deadbolts spread the force of a blow.

Do install a wide angle peephole to inspect visitors.

Do change tumblers if you lend keys and lose track of them.

Do lock or bolt windows. Approximately 25% of burglars enter this way but very few will break the glass.

Do install locks on sliding glass doors to prevent door from being lifted out of track.

Do secure window-mounted air conditioners so they're not easily removed or pushed in.

Do secure garages and basement windows—consider a metal grill.

Do consider exterior lighting with infra-red sensors. Floodlights are best.

Do lock up when at home while cutting grass or gardening. Transient burglars will drive around looking for such an opportunity and just walk inside.

Do use care with wedding and funeral announcements.

Do consider a dog—the larger, the better, and use "Beware of Dog" signs.

Do mark and photograph valuables or at least record brand name, model number, serial number, and otherwise note distinguishing characteristics.

Do consider lawncare and housesitters while on vacation.

Do consider safes, either hidden or large 500 pound gun safes.

Do consider a professionally installed and monitored alarm system with stickers and an audible alarm after otherwise securing your home.

