

7 Security Tips

1 If you plan to be away, make it appear as if someone is home. Have your:

- house watched.
- pets cared for.
- mail or newspaper held or picked up.
- lawn mowed.
- lights, radio, or the TV on timers.



2 Keep landscaping open and short enough to offer no hiding places. Choose thorny plants and shrubs that will not get taller than the windows to keep out prowlers.

3 Install outdoor lighting to shine on key areas. Leave them on at night. Motion-activated lights are highly effective for large areas which you may not wish to keep constantly illuminated.

4 Make sure that all entrances, parking areas, hallways, stairways, laundry rooms, and other common areas are well-lit. Check for and replace dim or burned out bulbs.

Leave an extra key to your home with neighbors instead of hiding one.

5 Do not leave notes about where you are and when you will return.

6 Have an up-to-date household inventory list and make sure your valuables are engraved with identification.

7 Check to make sure fire stairs have an emergency exit at ground level and that they are not accessible from the outside.

Make sure your house numbers are at least 4" tall and visible from the road.

Alarm Systems

Security systems vary widely in effectiveness and cost, even within a single community. Basic, monitored security service often includes a **"panic button,"** which also summons help in a health emergency.

- ✓ Make sure the security company you select is reputable. Check references.
- ✓ Learn how to use your system properly and what to do if you accidentally set it off.
- ✓ Consider having a small pet for security purposes.



Unmonitored alarms are of little use.

Signs of a Break-in

Do not go inside if you suspect someone has been, or still is, in your home. Call for help from a neighbor's phone. Do not touch anything. Look for these signs:

- A cut or removed window screen
- A broken window
- A door left open
- Items in disarray or moved
- A noise that sounds like someone breaking in or moving around in your home



If you are in the house:

1. Do not confront the burglar.
2. Try to get out of the house undetected.
3. Lock yourself in a room (*with a phone*).
4. Try to get to a phone to quietly call for help.
5. If the intruder enters your room, and you cannot hide, pretend to be asleep.

Home Security

Indoors • Outdoors • Alarm Systems

senior safe
National Child Safety Council



Home Security

On a national average, each year about 1 out of every 12 homes will be targeted by a burglar. Luck has little to do with these odds – burglars look for homes that offer easy entrance and getaway.

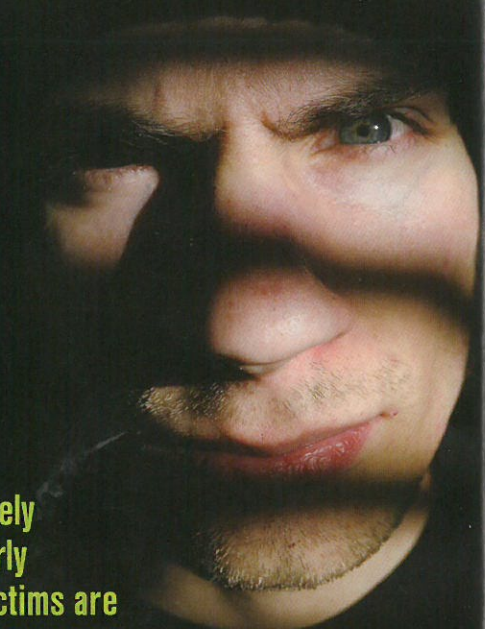
You may not need physical strength, speed, or expensive security devices for protection, but you do need to be cautious, aware of your surroundings, and appear in control.

- **Robberies account for 38% of violent crimes against seniors.**

- **Approximately 1/2 of elderly robbery victims are attacked by more than one robber.**

- **38% of elderly victims of violent crimes faced someone with a gun.**

- **Only 7 out of 10 elderly victims report a robbery or an attempted robbery to the police.**



Make Your Home Safe & Sound

Doors

- ✓ **Outside entry doors should be metal, metal-clad, or solid wood, not hollow core.** Make sure your doors fit tightly in their frames.
- ✓ **Keep all doors locked,** including those in the basement and garage. Be sure all outside doors have non-removable hinges and deadbolt locks with a minimum one-inch throw (bolt).



Locks won't work if you don't use them.

- ✓ **Double cylinder deadbolts** (requiring a key for opening from the inside) **are most secure**, but can be dangerous in a fire emergency and are prohibited in some communities.

- ✓ **Never attach an ID tag to your keychain.**



- ✓ **If you lose your key or move, install new locks right away.**
- ✓ **Doors with glass windows less than 40" from the lock can easily be opened** by breaking the glass and reaching inside. Replace the glass with an unbreakable pan, or replace the door.

- ✓ **Install a lens peephole or wide-angle viewer in all outside doors**, not just the front entry. Make sure they are accessible to all family members – including those in a wheelchair.

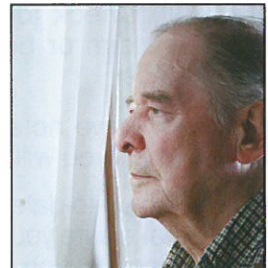
60% of residential burglaries take place during the daytime, in July and August.

- ✓ **Never let anyone at the door know you are home alone.**
- ✓ **Ask for photo identification from service or delivery people.** If you aren't sure they are who they say or if you didn't arrange the visit, call the company to verify.
- ✓ **Use metal "charlie bars" for sliding glass doors**, plus pin locks that slide a steel peg through both the stationary and movable doors. (A wooden rod wedged into the bottom inside track is less effective.)
- ✓ **Chain locks are not security devices!** Do not depend on them. They can be forced open.

Windows

- Pin locks are available for double-hung windows as well as sliding glass doors. They can be installed on the side sashes as well as the center sash to allow windows to be opened a few inches and still be secure. (These locks require only a drill for installation, so they are inexpensive.)
- Special locks for basement type windows are available in hardware stores.

Get to know your neighbors and ask them to keep an eye on your home.



- If your windows or fire escapes are equipped with grates or bars, make sure they meet fire department regulations and are easy to remove.
- Keep curtains and blinds closed at night.