

10 Simple Ways to Discourage Break-Ins

Lock It Up. More than 40 percent of break-ins happen without the use of force. That means a lot of people are leaving their houses without locking the doors and windows. Keep That Snow or Lawn Service Coming. A home that looks occupied discourages burglaries from entering.

Keep Lawn Service Coming. A home that looks occupied discourages burglaries from entering.

Know Your Neighbors. Tell a trusted neighbor you'll be away. Closer-knit neighborhoods generally report fewer break-ins because strangers will stick out, and people are more likely to keep a casual eye on other people's security. Neighborhood Watch Programs, started in the 1960s, can be very effective at lowering and preventing crime.

Prepare Before Vacation. If you are going out of town for an extended period of time, notify Mesquite Police by filling out the "Vacation Check Request" form from this link or request one from the Concierge Desk. Be sure to call Mesquite police and let them know if you return earlier than anticipated. As they patrol your property and you do not want them to think you are an intruder if you come back early and they do not know. Also, alert neighbors you trust about your trip and ask that they keep an eye on your property during that time. More importantly, when you leave town, don't leave signs of an empty house. That will only make your house look like a giant bulls-eye to a thief.

Get Help from You Local Neighborhood Watch volunteer. Police can help you stop crime before it happens. But your Neighborhood watch volunteer is added eyes and ears, for the police and they notify the police and request that they drive by your property to check on things. Many police stations also offer free security evaluations for your property. Ask a crime prevention officer, if he or she can survey your property and help you identify any security steps you can implement.

Secure Your Yard. Tall shrubs and overgrown trees are welcome hiding places for criminals to wait until the coast is clear to get into your house. That doesn't mean you need to cut down every plant in your yard. Just keep things manicured.

Don't Leave a Spare Key Out. It may seem like a good idea to leave a spare key hidden under a flower pot or doormat in case you get locked out of your house. But that's an open invitation for a burglar to walk inside without any difficulty. Someone could also see you retrieve the key at some point, giving away your hiding place.

Secure Sliding Doors and Windows. You can easily break into some older sliding doors by simply popping them off of their frame, even when locked. It's harder to do that with newer ones, but you should still take extra precaution to secure them since they can be an inviting entry for burglars. Simply take a strong dowel, steel bar or two-by-four and slide it into the back groove. That way, even if people can pick the lock, the rod stops the door from sliding back and opening.

Tricking Burglars. If burglars can tell that someone is home, there's a greater chance that they won't attempt to break in. Remember, more break-ins occur during the day when many people are at work. For that reason, when you leave the house, create an illusion that someone's still there.

Don't Showboat. Leaving certain things lying around your yard or in plain sight from the road can unwittingly lure thieves onto your property like frantic bargain hunters to a flea market. First, if you have a bicycle or scooter that someone could easily walk away with, roll it inside or into your garage. Also, after purchasing a new plasma screen television or other pricey electronics or appliance, don't leave the box out beside the trash can or recycling bin. That tells people you have something brand spanking new that could fetch decent dollars on the street. It may also leave them wondering what other goodies are inside your home.