

In The Last Six Months. . .

Did you leave the front door or garage door unlocked while you made a quick trip to the grocery store?

Was it too much trouble to check the meter reader's identification before letting him in?

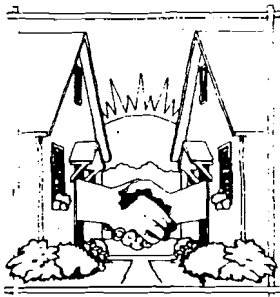
Did you forget to tell a neighbor that you were going away for the weekend?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, you are making it easier for a thief to work in your community.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Good locks, simple precautions, neighborly alertness, and common sense can help prevent most property crimes.

Get together with your neighbors to keep an eye on each other's homes. Half of all home burglaries occur during the day when alert neighbors could spot the thieves and call the police. Many neighborhoods have started youth patrols, or senior citizen "Window Watches," or trained people like newspaper carriers, cab drivers and utility employees to watch out for suspicious activity on their routes.



LOCKS, DOORS, AND WINDOWS

- Install good deadbolt locks in your doors, not the springlatch ones with the key in the knob. Use them! (About 50 percent of burglars get in through unlocked doors and windows!)
- Avoid door locks that can be manipulated by breaking glass or door panels to reach inside.
- Make sure outside doors, including the one between your house and garage, are solid, 1¾ inch metal or wood and fit tightly in their frames. Hinges should be on the inside.

- 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 by sliding a bolt or nail through a hole drilled at a downward angle in each top corner of the inside sash and part-way through the outside sash, or buy window key locks at a hardware store. Consider grilles for basement or street-level windows.

OUTSIDE

- Trim back shrubbery that hides doors or windows. Cut back tree limbs that could help a thief climb into second story windows.
- Make sure all porches, entrances, and yards are well-lighted.
- Help keep your neighborhood in good shape. Dark alleys, litter and run-down areas attract crime.

KEY SENSE

- Do not hide house keys in mailboxes, planters, or under doormats. Give a duplicate key to a trusted friend or neighbor in case you are locked out.
- Do not put any personal identification on key rings.
- Leave only your ignition key with service mechanics and parking garage attendants.
- If you lose the keys to your home or move, change the locks immediately.

ANSWERING THE DOOR

- 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 door and the jamb is not a good substitute because it can be broken easily.
- Don't open the door to anyone you do not know without first verifying that person's identity.

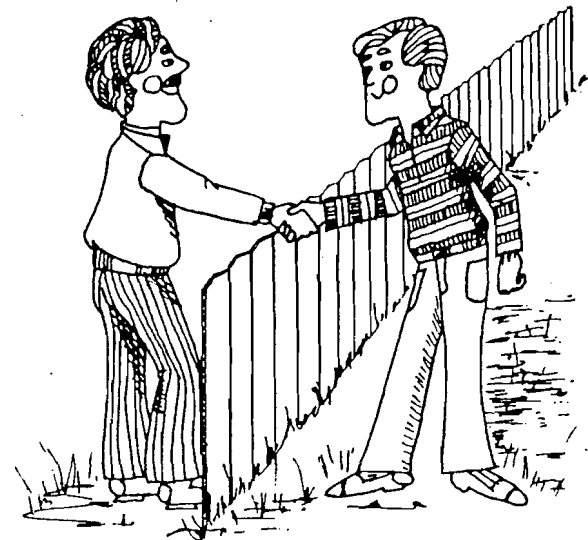
ANSWERING THE TELEPHONE

- Don't give any information to "wrong number" callers. Ask what number they were dialing.
- Check references of any person calling about a survey or credit check before volunteering information. Offer to call the person back instead of responding immediately.
- Hang up immediately on any threatening or harassing calls.
- If the caller persists, call police and the phone company.

GOING AWAY?

Burglars hope to avoid confrontations, so make your home look occupied!

- Leave lights on and the radio playing, preferably a talk show, when you go out.
- Keep your garage door closed and locked.
- Use inexpensive timing devices to turn inside lights and radios or television on and off at different times.
- If no one will be at home for more than a few days, arrange to have someone pick up the mail and newspapers. Have deliveries stopped or sent elsewhere.



Even though today's lifestyles sometimes make it difficult to be as neighborly as we'd like, being a good neighbor is one of the best ways to prevent crime.

- Get to know your neighbors and discuss your concerns about safety in the community.
- If you notice anything suspicious in your neighborhood, call the police immediately.
- Exchange work and vacation schedules with a neighbor you trust so you can keep an eye on each other's homes.
- Never tell a stranger or an individual you don't trust that a neighbor lives alone, is ill, or is not at home.
- Report any nonworking street lights to the utility company immediately.

AND FOR ADDED PROTECTION . . .

- If you keep very valuable possessions in your home or live in an isolated area, investigate the benefits of an alarm system. Be sure to check the company's references.
- Join Operation Identification and mark all valuable property. Compile an inventory, using photos or videotapes if possible.
- Make sure your house number is clearly visible from the street and the alley if you have one to help police and fire departments respond to emergency calls.
- Don't include your address in a classified ad and don't announce plans for a party or vacation in the local newspaper.
- Find an unpredictable place to hide valuable items, like a movable floorboard, under logs in the woodbox, or among cleaning supplies under the sink.
- Store little-used items like a coin collection or stock certificates in a safe deposit box.
- Take out homeowners' insurance to protect yourself against financial loss from burglary or fire.
- Install smoke alarms.

TAKE ACTION — TODAY

1. Call your police or sheriff's department for a free home security survey.
2. Teach your children safety rules about answering the phone and the door and how to get out if there's a fire.
3. Join or start a Neighborhood Watch, Block Watch or Apartment Watch. Start a "Safe House" program for children.
4. Get together with your neighbors to buy dead-bolt locks in bulk (and at less cost to individuals). Organize a cooperative lock installation project and check to see if elderly or handicapped neighbors need new locks.
5. Offer some neighborly assistance to anyone who's been the victim of crime: an ear to listen, phone numbers of counselors and victims' units, tips on home security, a ride to court . . .

Crime Prevention tips from:

The National Crime Prevention Council
The Woodward Building
733 15th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005

and

Crime Prevention
Ada County Sheriff's Department
7200 Barrister Drive
Boise, Idaho 83704



Help me, McGruff

**TAKE A BITE OUT OF
CRIME®**