# Home Security Survey Checklist

This checklist was designed to help you make a security survey of your own home.

The first purpose of a home security inspection is to identify features in your home or daily routines of your family, which might make your home an easy target for a burglar.

The security inspection should begin at your front door, include an inspection of all your doors and windows, locks, lights, and landscaping. Each question on the checklist, which you answer no, indicates a security weakness or hazard that requires your attention.

**DOORS:**

1. Does door have 180 degree peep hole?
2. Are locks that can be opened from inside at least 40 inches from glass?
3. Are entrance doors solid core?
4. Do they have dead bolt locks?
5. If hinge pins are outside, are they non-removable?
6. Does door securely fit doorjamb?
7. Is doorjamb tightly fastened?
8. Is strike plate securely fastened to doorjamb?
9. Does bolt extend sufficiently into strike plate?
10. Have locks been re-keyed since you moved in?

**WINDOWS:**

11. Have double hung windows been pinned?
12. Do metal windows have auxiliary locks?
13. Can windows left open for ventilation be secured?
14. Do basement windows have auxiliary locks?
15. Do curtains or drapes fully cover window?
16. Is window air conditioner secured from inside?

**GARAGE:**

17. Does door close tightly?
18. Does overhead door have a track padlock?
19. Is padlock of high quality?
20. Is hasp of high quality, installed without screws showing?
21. Do you keep overhead door closed and locked when not in use?
22. Do you remove vehicle keys when garage is locked?
23. Can garage light be turned on from inside home?

**EXTERIOR:**
24. Do you belong to a NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH Program?
25. Are shrubs cut below window level?
26. Are tree limbs cut above window level?
27. Is residence number visible from street?
28. Can mailbox be locked?
29. Is front door well lit?
30. Is back door well lit?
31. Are bicycles, mowers, ladders kept inside?
32. Have you engraved property and logged identifying numbers?

**VACATIONS:**
33. Do you stop deliveries?
34. Do you notify police?
35. Do you notify neighbors?
36. Do you set light timers?
37. Is your yard taken care of?
38. Do you arrange for hand bills to be picked up?

**ADDITIONAL CRIME CHECKS:**
39. If you need a non-lethal weapon for self-protection, do you have a safe, chemical device?
40. If you have a gun, is it kept secured?
41. Do you keep most of your cash in the bank?
42. Do you keep a list of all valuable property, credit cards and serial numbers?
43. Do you keep this list in a safe place?
44. Do you avoid displaying valuables to strangers?
45. Have you memorized the telephone number of your police?

Doors

Hinged Doors

The most common door types in houses and apartments for use in front entries, porch doors, and doors from garages and basements into the living area of a residence are hinge doors. It is important that all exterior hinge doors be of solid core construction, if made of wood or that metal clad doors be used. Hollow core or composition board doors can easily be battered or bored. When checking the security of your doors, the door itself and the hinges, locks and other hardware must be considered.

For all key-in-the-knob locks, a dead-latching plunger type is recommended. Check for these features.

The most frequently used lock for hinge doors is the key-in-the-knob latch lock. These locks can be forced by breaking off the knob, and frequently they can be opened by prying or slipping a piece of plastic, such as a credit card, between the jamb and the bolt. Key-in-the-knob locks can effectively be supplemented by the addition of a deadbolt.

Locks for Hinged Doors

The best defense for a good metal or solid core wood door is a deadlock with a one-inch throw bolt. If there are no windows in or near the door, the bolt may be operated from the inside by a thumb turn. Outside operation can be by key or combination.

When installing a deadbolt, attach the strike plate to the door with three inch brass wood screws. The screws should penetrate through the frame to a structural member.

If your door has glass panes or if there are windows within forty inches of the lock, a double cylinder deadlock is recommended, so that a key is required from either side of the door.

The jimmy-proof deadlock shown below can be used on any hinge door where the strike can be securely fastened to the door frame. These locks come in double cylinder and inside thumb operated models.

Doors

If your door hinges are located on the outside of the door, non-removable hinge pins should be used. There is also a simple way to prevent removal of a door once the hinge pins have been extracted. Remove the two center screws from the hinge and insert a headless screw in such a manner that when the door is closed the screw will engage the other hinge.

For doors with glass panels that require special treatment - such as doors to garages and alleys and areaways, which may conceal a burglar - security screening or decorative grilles should be used. Screens or grilles should be securely mounted using non-removable screws.

For solid panel exterior doors, a see-through view is recommended.

Sliding Glass Doors

Sliding glass doors present a major security problem if they do not have the proper locks and if special steps are not taken to prevent removal of the door.

A sliding glass door is lifted into position when installed and, therefore, must be lifted from the track to be removed. To prevent this, it is recommended that 1 1/4 inch pan head (large head), sheet metal screws be inserted into the top of the door frame at both ends and at the middle. These screws should be adjusted so that the door barely clears them when it is operated.

The best lock for a sliding glass door is a deadlock, which utilizes a bore pin tumbler cylinder and is operated by a key from the outside. The lock bolt should engage the strike sufficiently so that it will not be disengaged by any amount of movement. When the existing inside pull has to be changed in order to accommodate a new deadlock, an inside cylinder pull is recommended as a replacement.

Windows

Double hung sash windows, which operate upward and downward, usually have a simple sash lock which can easily be jimmied. Check your windows to see how well your lock works. Storm windows and screens offer some additional protection.

The most effective protection for double hung windows is a key-locking security sash lock. These should be mounted with two inch or three inch wood screws.

If you need windows open for ventilation, insert screws or metal pins in both upper and lower sash. Commercial sash locking pins are also available.

Protect ALL your windows. Remember that second floor and basement windows are as important as your first floor windows. Screens and storm windows are always an asset if properly secured.

Sliding windows - either metal or wood frame - should be protected in the same way as sliding doors. Wood or metal dowels laid in the track and screws set in the track to prevent the window from being lifted out are effective protective measures.

Casement windows generally open and close by means of a gear-operating handle and have a locking device that secures the window to the center post. Some protection is offered by removing the crank handle from the operating mechanism. Do not leave casement windows partially open as they can easily be forced.

Louvered windows offer the same security problems as casement windows. Small slat louvers have the advantage that it is difficult to remove enough lights to gain entry easily. Make sure your louvered window locks are in working order.

## Lights

Exterior lighting is extremely important in residential security. Each exterior doorway should be lighted to prevent a burglar from concealing his activities. Yards and windows should be lighted to prevent concealment. A number of ornamental and functional outdoor lights are available.

Yard lights and entrance lights can be equipped with sensors which will turn the light on at dusk and off at dawn

Ornamental porch and yard post lamps are a means of eliminating night blind spots.

To give the appearance that you are at home, use an electric timer to turn lamps on in the evening and off at your normal retirement hour. Timers can be used to turn on radios as well as lamps. Use at least one timer on each floor of the house.

## GARAGES

Garage doors are a possible means of entry to your house, as well as offering a burglar the opportunity to steal automobiles, tools, ladders, bicycles and other property stored in the garage. Keep your door closed and locked.

## WALKS AND DRIVEWAYS

Walks and driveways should be kept free from offering concealment to intruders and other criminals.

## GATES AND FENCES

While offering possible concealment to criminals, gates and fences properly used can also deter the removal of large items and increase the difficulty of breaking in.

## PRUNE LARGE TREES

Low limbs can provide second story access.

## LAWN CARE

A very effective clue that someone is at home and cares.

## TRIM SHRUBS

Deny intruders a hiding place to work, don't block the view. Permit ready visibility by neighbors and police.

## ALARMS

Residential burglar alarms are available from electrical and hardware dealers, as well as entire systems that may be leased or purchased from alarm companies. Most residential alarms emit a loud noise from a bell, siren or tone generator. An audible alarm on doors and windows can be an effective deterrent to the amateur burglar. If you do install an audible alarm, make sure that your family and your neighbors are informed about its function and that they are trained to call the police when they hear the alarm.