

Home Security

Crime and Violence Prevention Center • California Attorney General's Office



The facts about burglary...

- More than six million residential burglaries occur every year in this country. That's one every ten seconds!
- Nearly half of these burglaries are committed without force — that is through UNLOCKED doors and windows!

Most of these burglaries could be prevented.

- Always lock your doors and windows even when leaving for “just a minute.”
- Never leave a house key available: under a doormat, in a flower pot, on the ledge of the door. *These are the first places a burglar will look.*

If you would like to make life even harder for crooks — remember the following tips:

- Exterior doors should have “dead bolt” locks with a 1 inch strong metal bar extending into the frame.
- Sliding doors and windows should all have “ventilation” locks as well as auxiliary locks to bolster security.
- Be sure to include good locks for garage, cellar, patio or other doors that lead out through storage areas or a spare room.
- For more information on locks, contact your local law enforcement agency or write for the Attorney General's *Home Security Handbook*.

Going Out?

- Lock all doors and windows.
- Use timers so that lights, radio, TV, go on and off throughout the house to indicate someone is home.
- For longer trips be sure to stop mail and newspaper delivery or have a neighbor collect them daily.
- In short make your house look, “LIVED IN.”

Remember, if you come home and see a broken window or a jimmied door, don't go in. Confronting a burglar can be dangerous. Phone the police immediately.

Other Tips

- Install a wide angle lens viewer in the front door. Never open the door without knowing who is there.
- Consider alarm systems or trained security dogs for additional protection.
- Whenever you move to a new home, have the locks changed.

Operation I.D.

Another deterrent to “would be” burglars is *Operation Identification*.

- Mark your valuables with your driver's license number preceded by the letters “CA.”
- Post Operation I.D. stickers in doors and windows to warn housebreakers to stay away.

- Burglars don't want marked merchandise because it is difficult to fence and evidence of guilt if they are caught.
- So mark your items as conspicuously as possible without defacing them.
- Photograph those items that cannot be engraved (jewelry, silverware, antiques).
- Operation I.D. also facilitates the return of stolen property when it is recovered.

Don't let them knock your block off!

Want to know the best crime prevention tool ever invented? A GOOD NEIGHBOR!

- Law enforcement officers can't be everywhere at once, but you and your neighbors can. You're the ones who really know what's going on in the neighborhood.
- Put that neighborhood know-how to work. It's simple: just use your eyes and ears — then your telephone. If you spot something suspicious, call the police or sheriff immediately.
- Don't try to stop a criminal yourself —it can be dangerous.
- Neighbors working together in cooperation with law enforcement make one of the best crime fighting teams around.
- For more information on how to start your own NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH GROUP — contact your local law enforcement agency or write the Attorney General's Crime and Violence Prevention Center for your own Neighborhood Watch Guide.

"Don't let anyone tell you that Neighborhood Watch is an excuse to be noseey. In three communities of Long Beach, California, active Neighborhood Watch programs resulted in a 45 percent reduction in residential burglaries!"



Daniel E. Lungren
Attorney General

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