

Neighbourhood Support New Zealand



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Neighbourhood Support Fact Sheet

Home Burglar Alarms

There are many ways to reduce the risk of being burgled (see the Fact Sheets titled [Who burgles a house & why?](#) and [Reducing the burglar's opportunities](#))

A burglar alarm is an effective crime prevention deterrent. Once an alarm system activates, a burglar rarely lingers at the scene to gather up property.

An alarm also:

- increases safety and security for you and your family;
- provides peace of mind; and
- helps keep your household possessions safe.

An alarm, combined with other security measures such as security lighting and good locks on doors and windows, can go a long way toward increasing the security of your home and reducing the risk of burglary.

What type of alarm do I need?

When considering the type of alarm best suited for your home you should think about:

- the requirements of your family; and
- your lifestyle and type of home.

You need to feel secure and confident about your home security but you not want to feel like a prisoner in your own home.

Basic alarm systems

Most simple alarm systems include:

- 2 - 4 sensors/detectors (which can distinguish between human and pet movement);
- a touch pad or key pad;
- a control unit (ideally with battery back-up in case of a power failure); and
- an internal and/or external siren.

More sophisticated alarms have a wider range of features such as:

- alarming certain areas of the house while you are home;
- perimeter detectors which can detect an intruder before they enter your property; and

- panic alarms which let you activate the alarm remotely e.g. from your bedside.

How much does an alarm system cost?

A reliable alarm system, installed by a certified company, can cost between \$1200 - \$2500. You can, however, spend much more for additional security features.

It's wise to get a range of quotes from different alarm companies and thoroughly research and compare what they offer so you can see what you're getting for your money. Don't be pressured into buying until you're satisfied the alarm and the company is right for you.

Alarm Installation

One of the most important aspects of a home alarm system is to have it properly installed by a technician from a reputable security company.

Companies and people installing, repairing or monitoring burglar alarms should have a current Security Guard's Licence issued by the Department for Courts pursuant to the Private Investigators and Security Guards Act 1974. You should ask to see their licence.

Alarm Monitoring

A monitored alarm is an extra safeguard and you should consider having your alarm monitored by a reputable security company i.e. a company with a Security Guard's Licence.

The different types of monitoring, costs and levels of service provided by the monitoring company should be explored when getting quotes for your alarm system.

Points to note

- If someone in your neighbourhood already has an alarm, ask them about the company they used and if it suits their needs.
- Most insurance companies offer premium discounts on house and contents insurance if a burglar alarm is installed.
- Less expensive alarms may vary in quality, but the deterrent value is better than no alarm.
- If you become aware of intruders in your home, **never** confront them. Your personal safety and the safety of your family should be your primary concern.