

# Neighbourhood Support New Zealand



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[www.ns.org.nz](http://www.ns.org.nz)

## Neighbourhood Support Fact Sheet

### Reducing the burglar's opportunities

Knowing how a burglar thinks and operates is good background information to help put things in place to prevent you or someone you know becoming a burglary victim.

The following information outlines some practical and simple steps to reduce the risk of being burgled:

- Set up or join a Neighbourhood Support Group in your area and advertise the fact by displaying Neighbourhood Support signs and stickers.
- Make sure doors, windows and other entry and exit points from your house have good quality, effective catches and locks - deadlocks if possible. Get into the habit of always using these locks
- Always lock doors and windows at night, if you're out in the garden or going out or away. Don't leave a door key hidden outside - burglars know all the places to look
- Keep garden sheds and garages secure and lock away tools and ladders
- Have an alarm system professionally installed and consider having it monitored by a reputable security company
- Install sensor lights on access paths or around main external doors
- Install a 'peep-hole' in a front door so you know who's visiting you
- Ask unannounced visitors who they are and what they want. If you're not satisfied with their answer, don't open the door to them
- Trim trees or remove shrubbery which might 'hide' a burglar's activity
- Get to know your neighbours and develop plans to deal with problems or suspicious activity. Exchanging phone numbers or emergency contact details is a good start.
- If you're going away, neighbours can collect your mail or newspaper and make your place look occupied, for example by turning on lights, parking a vehicle in your driveway, hanging washing on your line or mowing lawns
- Mark valuable property with serial numbers and keep a record of these numbers
- Consider placing "Beware of Dog" signs on gates or fences
- If you have an answer phone, don't record a message that suggests you're out or alone.
- Police are always interested in suspicious activity. Don't hesitate to call Police to report something out of the ordinary and, if you see a crime being committed, call 111.

Above all, remember burglars like easy, tempting opportunities. DON'T overlook the obvious and DO all you can to reduce the risk of being burgled.

If you, or someone you know has been burgled, it is best to take immediate action to improve the security of your home and reduce the risk of being burgled again.

If you do see someone acting suspiciously in your neighbourhood ask yourself the following questions.

- Have I seen this person in the neighbourhood before? [If you live in a cul-de-sac or a more rural location a non-local will be immediately obvious]
- Does s/he look comfortable doing what they're doing?
- Is there a sense of purpose to the person's activity? Do they look like they're going somewhere? Are they hesitant or even loitering?
- What does the person appear to be looking at and why?
- How did the person come to be in the area? Is there a car nearby, and if s/he is some distance from it, why? What's the car registration number?

Answering these questions and even taking notes about the person's appearance, clothes, height or other distinguishing features can go a long way toward identifying a crime suspect and making your neighbourhood a safer place to live.