

Neighbourhood Support New Zealand



Phone 0800 4NEIGHBOURS
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www.ns.org.nz

Neighbourhood Support Fact Sheet

Holiday Security Tips

Most burglaries are opportunist and happen when owners are away. Unfortunately it is necessary to be especially careful at Christmas time, as homes are more often empty with many people out shopping, socialising or on holiday. Burglars are also aware that most houses have presents to steal. While enjoying the festive season and your holiday, please don't overlook your home security. Taking a few simple precautions will help to deter all but the most determined burglar.

Remember

Shut and lock all doors, even if you're only going out for a short time.

Close and lock all windows - burglars don't like to smash glass.

Do not "hide" keys outside your home, nor leave them in an obvious place near doors or windows.

Make sure your valuables - including televisions and stereo systems - cannot be seen from outside.

Make your home look occupied when you're away by using timers on radios and lights

When you buy new items like DVD players or video recorders, don't advertise by leaving the empty boxes out for recycling, turn the boxes inside out and fold them down.

Hide or lock away passports and official documents - identity fraud is on the rise.

Don't leave car keys near doors or windows - car theft through burglary is also on the rise.

Consider engraving your property - this puts thieves off because it makes it harder to re-sell.

Ensure you have an up to date list and photographs of your valuables and keep copies in a safe place.

Homes with good security are much less likely to be burgled than those without.

- Deadlocks make it harder for burglars to get out with your goods if they got in through a window. Don't forget to put a deadlock on the internal access door between the garage and the house.

- Window locks deter burglars because smashing glass attracts attention and can leave forensic evidence.
- Visible burglar alarms are a great deterrent - though it's courteous to your neighbours to ensure that they shut off after a few minutes.
- Security lighting is also a good deterrent, but should be placed carefully near entry points so as not to disturb neighbours.
- Timers on radios and lights make it look like you're there when you're not.
- Spy holes and chains on doors let you see who's there without opening up.

When you go on holiday

- Use timers on radios and lights.
- Cancel milk, newspaper and mail deliveries.
- Have a neighbour stop by to collect junk mail, and open and close curtains.
- Make sure your neighbours know where they can contact you in an emergency and when you will be home.
- Invite neighbours to use your driveway and clothesline to make it look like someone is home.
- Lock away garden tools and ladders that could be used by a would-be thief to gain access to your house.
- Make arrangements for family pets to be looked after.
- If you are away for more than a few days, arrange to have your lawns mown.
- Consider inviting a relative or friend to house sit for you.
- Whatever you do, don't leave a message on your answer phone that you away. Instead, clear the messages yourself or arrange to have a friend check them regularly for you.

If moving home

- Ensure that you use reputable removers and trades people - many will belong to a professional association.
- Only give out keys to people you trust, and don't label them with your name and address.
- Consider changing the locks to your new home.

Remember, if you see anyone committing a crime or behaving suspiciously, phone the Police Emergency number - 111 - and report it. If they are in a vehicle, write down the number plate.