



Crime Prevention Tips

Crime Prevention Begins at Home



Crime Prevention ... a community responsibility

Crime Prevention is a community effort.

By working together, neighbours can increase the safety and security of their homes and neighbourhood.

Following are tips to improve the security of your residence. For more information, please contact your local police service to see what programs are available in your community.

- Get to know your neighbours, their habits and schedules.
- Become involved in Block Watch, Crime Free Multi-Housing or other crime prevention programs.
- Apartment dwellers can join resident groups and be proactive in your apartment community.
- Report suspicious activity to the police immediately.

Be prepared regardless of how secure your home is.

- Keep seldom-used valuables and documents in a safety deposit box.
- Don't store valuables all in one place, particularly in your bedroom; it is the first place thieves look.
- Record serial numbers of all appliances and electronics and mark your possessions with your driver's licence number and province.
- Photographs and video of your possessions are helpful in recovery.
- Contact your local police service for more information and to borrow marking tools.
- Use a peephole to see who is at your door before you open it.
- Ask police, service technicians, etc. for identification before allowing them into your home.
- If a stranger asks to use your phone, don't allow them to enter. Offer to make the call yourself.
- Don't indicate your first name or salutation in the phone book or on your answering machine.
- Draw your curtains at night.



If you think your home has been broken into, stop and think before you act.

- Don't go in. Go to a neighbour's house and call the police.
- Tell your neighbours so they can take precautions.

If you are home and someone breaks in: Remember - your life is more valuable than your possessions. Following these tips may prevent you from being harmed.

- Call 911, give your location, and stay on the line. Give the Operator as much information as you are able.
- Try to get out of the house.
- If you can't get out of the house, lock yourself in a room.
- Make noise. Knowing you're home may scare the thief away.
- Remember as many details about the person as possible so you can give a good description to police.



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Doors and windows provide thieves the most accessible entry points to homes, so security measures should be focused on these areas.

- Equip all exterior doors with wide-angle door-viewers.
- Install dead-bolt locks with a minimum 2.5cm (1") throw on all exterior doors. Don't rely on night-chains.
- Use 3" screws in hinges and striker plates.
- Exterior doors should be of solid core construction.
- Reinforce windows and sliding glass doors by installing anti-lift devices, security film, pins, auxiliary locks, etc.
- Pay special attention to windows within 1 metre of an exterior door.
- Place a length of doweling in the lower track between the door/window and frame.
- Bolt window-mounted air conditioners in place on the inside of the house.
- When selecting window protection, particularly bars, ensure windows can still be opened in case of fire.
- Doors must allow people unrestricted exit from a building. Doors with double cylinder locks (keyed both sides) are not permitted by the Fire Commissioner's Office.

Lighting provides additional protection to doors and windows. Thieves don't like to be seen.

- Use chronological or photosensitive timers and/or motion sensors on exterior lights.
- Mount lights out of reach so they can't be tampered with.
- All entranceways and window areas should be well lit.

When leaving for vacation, take extra precautions. Thieves will target homes that look unoccupied.

- Tell trusted neighbours that you will be away and ask them to watch your home.
- Tell them how they can reach you and when you expect to return.
- Don't put your home address on luggage tags.
- Turn your telephone ringer down.
- Forward calls to a cell or family member so callers won't know you're away.
- Put lights, radio and/or TV on timers.
- Cancel all deliveries and have someone pick up flyers and perform seasonal maintenance.
- Have a friend or relative spend some time at your home every few days and park a vehicle in your driveway.
- Some insurance policies require frequent checks of your home for the coverage to remain valid.
- Disable garage door openers.

Apartment buildings require special strategies for home security

- Do not put your salutation (i.e. Miss, Mr., etc.), or first name on the intercom panel or mailbox.
- Request windows be installed on doors to stairways, parking lot and common areas.
- Don't admit anyone you don't know to your building.
- Report any malfunctioning doors or lights.
- Don't store valuables in storage lockers.
- When entering or leaving the parking garage, watch the gate close to ensure no one enters.

If you see a suspicious person in your building, call police.