

8 Ways to Make Your Home Unattractive to Burglars



Presented by



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Protect What Matters To You



Your home is your castle. In addition to being your single most valuable financial investment, it's a very personal, private space. It's where you feel comfortable and secure. It's where your treasures, your relationships, and your memories are.

Unfortunately, not everyone respects what you've worked hard to build. Burglars and thieves have no qualms about entering your private space and taking what rightfully belongs to you—including your peace of mind. In fact, the most recent records show that there were 3,726 burglaries in Colorado Springs in a single year.

Most homeowners take pride in their homes and work hard to make them attractive—both inside and out. But one of the most effective things you can do to protect your family and your property is to make sure that your home is *unattractive*—to burglars and thieves. And while it's good to stop burglars at your door, it's even better if you have the kind of house that they don't want to go near in the first place.

Here are 8 simple steps you can take to make your home unattractive to burglars.

1. Keep Trees and Shrubs Trimmed

Burglars don't like people watching them enter a home. Too often break-ins are made easier by trees and shrubs that provide thieves with cover while they are breaking in. While we all enjoy a nicely landscaped yard, make sure that the trees and shrubs near your house don't block the view of your doors and windows. Contrary to popular belief, most burglars enter a home through the front door.

If trees, bushes, or even planted pots obscure the view of your house from the street, you may be creating the kind of break-in opportunity burglars love. This doesn't mean you can't have shrubs or trees or flowers around your doors or windows, but make sure these items don't provide unintended cover.

One simple way to check this is to stand at your front and back doors and near first floor windows. Have your spouse or a friend stand in the street or at your neighbor's house to see if you are clearly visible. Again, burglars don't like being watched, so don't give them what they want. Even if you're not comfortable trimming growth yourself, it's worth a couple of hundred bucks to have it done professionally if it protects your home.

2. Install Window Well Covers

Window wells are another place that shelter burglars from watchful eyes. If your home has basement windows with window wells, it's easy for someone to crouch there out of sight where they can take their time to pry open a window. Not only does being below ground provide visual cover for a break-in, but it can also muffle the sounds an intruder might make. Installing window well covers takes away this advantage for thieves, and it can also prevent neighborhood children and pets from falling into your window wells and getting hurt. You can purchase window well covers at a place like Home Depot or Lowes for anywhere from \$15 to \$400.

3. Don't Be Too Predictable With Your Indoor Lights

Nothing says, "Nobody is at home!" quite like a dark house at night. It's almost like putting out a welcome mat for someone who is considering a break-in. Of course nobody wants to leave all their lights on all the time. So what can you do? Some homeowners install timers to turn interior lights on and off at regular intervals. And while that may be better than nothing, it often doesn't fool thieves. Burglars often observe a house for a period of time before trying to enter. If they notice a pattern (the living room lights going on at exactly the same time every evening) you've tipped them off that you're using a timer. Maybe you remember the old "Home Alone" movies. The burglars knew exactly when the lights in every house on the block would turn on.

A better solution is to have lights that go on at different times. There are phone apps that will allow you to turn interior lights on with your smart phone from wherever you happen to be. And you can choose to turn on the lights in different rooms, too. That way it looks more like someone is home.

4. Install Motion-sensitive Exterior Lights

Exterior lights are also unattractive to burglars who are approaching a home at night. And motion-activated lights are particularly effective because they are a bit of a surprise. You may not want exterior lights on all over your property all night, but a motion-activated light only comes on when something moves. You can adjust most lights to stay on as long as you like and with some you can also adjust their sensitivity. You'll want to be a good neighbor and not install lights that are so bright that they keep you next door neighbor awake, but you will want something that makes a prowler uncomfortable.

5. Mind Your Mail

We've already talked about the fact that burglars don't like company. That means they prefer ransacking a house that's unattended. So don't advertise your absence by leaving a mailbox full of mail. If you're going to be gone for a while (whether it's a business trip or on vacation), get someone to pick up your mail on a daily basis. It could be a neighbor or a friend. Sometimes homeowners have mail delivery cancelled, but we've already mentioned that many burglars observe homes before break-ins. If the mail truck drives past your house everyday without stopping, that can actually be a signal to thieves that you're not home.

6. Avoid Other Unintended Announcements of Absence

Burglars look for other little clues that a house is empty. They may check to see if there are door hanger advertisements hanging on your front door. Or they may look for newspapers (even those free neighborhood papers) collecting in your driveway or on your porch. Have the person who checks your mail look for those things as well because they can be clear indications of your absence.

If you're away in the summer months, make sure that your lawn gets mowed so that it looks like someone is home. And if you travel in the winter, make sure that someone clears away the snow in your driveway and on your walks. According to City ordinances, you're responsible for that anyway, but an un-shoveled sidewalk and driveway is a pretty unmistakable sign that nobody is home if it stays that way for several days.



7. Be Smart With Social Media

A lot of us enjoy staying in touch with friends and family via social media. We like letting people know what we're up to and how things are going on sites such as Facebook. The problem is that we don't always know who is watching and listening. We're not suggesting that you curtail your social media activity, but don't advertise when you're going to be away—or how long you'll be gone. Save your pictures and descriptions for when you get back. And it's also wise not to mention major purchases online. Knowing that there's something valuable in your home can be a lure for a burglar. Just use common sense about what you post—and remember that you can't always control who sees what you post.

8. Let Prowlers Know You're Protected

We've already looked at a number of ways to protect your home and to make it a place burglars want to avoid. Some of these tips will cost you nothing. Others may cost you a few dollars to implement. There is, however, one thing you can do that is more effective than all of these things combined. Studies show that homes that have an active security system are three times less likely to be burglarized than homes without security systems. One sure-fire way to get burglars to avoid your home is with a prominently placed sign that tells them that your home is protected by a security system.



For less than you'd pay for some of the other solutions mentioned here, you can enjoy state-of-the-art home security that protects your home 24-7 365 days of the year. You can add features according to your specific needs and budget. And you'll have the peace of mind that when burglars see the sign in front of your home, they'll avoid it like the plague. No burglar starts his day thinking, "I'll look for a home to rob where it's hard to get in and I'll most likely get caught."

You love your home. Give burglars and thieves a good reason to hate it!

*For more information about an affordable security system
that fits your specific needs, give us a call at
719-433-1494 or visit us online at getyouralarm.com*