

SAFE AT HOME: Establishing Your First Line of Defense



Presented by



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To Ensure Safety for Your Home and Family— Start with the Basics

Keeping your family, home, and possessions safe may be a high priority for you, but crime statistics show that actually doing that is a challenge. According to City-Data.com there were 3,726 burglaries in Colorado Springs in 2013 (the most recent statistics available). So how do you go about protecting the safety of your home and family?

Start with the basics. Establish a “first line of defense” for you home. In military strategy, a nation’s first line of defense is generally its armed forces. It’s in position to protect the country against unwanted outside forces. The same thing is true in the world of medicine. Your body’s first line of defense is comprised of basic barriers that defend your body from infection, including

things such as skin, tears, mucus, cilia, stomach acid, and ‘friendly’ bacteria.

What’s the first line of defense in your home? Surprisingly, it’s something pretty simple: your front door. Most studies show that approximately 34 percent of home break-ins take place through the front door. Some security experts put that figure even higher. So what can you do to ensure that this first line of defense is secure? Let’s look at a few areas.

Make a Solid Choice

All of your exterior doors should be solid and kick-proof. You have options of a solid wood (or at least a solid wood core), a fiberglass door, or a metal door. The strongest option is a reinforced steel door. There are many attractive steel doors on the market today. Still, not everyone likes the look and feel of steel. If a metal door feels too “industrial” to you, a solid wood door is still a great option. Just make sure it’s really solid and not just veneer over a pressed-wood core.

Watch the Windows

You might like the light that door windows provide, but keep security in mind. If you choose a door that includes a window (or windows) make sure that the glass is reinforced so it can’t be easily broken. Also, pay attention to where the window is located. You don’t want something that allows an intruder to break the glass and easily unlock the door by reaching in. If your concern is being able to see who is at the front door, you can install a peep hole at eye-level that will allow you to look out without having outsiders looking in. There are also home security systems that allow for the installation of a discrete video camera that allow you to check the identity of visitors without even going to the door.



Don't Go Cheap on a Deadbolt

Even the best-built exterior door won't protect your home if it doesn't have a strong lock. There are two aspects to consider here. One is making sure that the deadbolt lock extends deep enough into your door frame. A shallow deadbolt is too easy for a burglar to force. The other thing to be mindful of is the quality of the lock. This is not the place to cut corners. You may not need the most expensive dead-bolt lock on the market, but make sure you don't buy the cheapest, either. A few dollars spent to ensure quality is a good investment.

Focus on the Frame and Doorjamb

In the same way that the lock itself is critical, the frame and doorjamb play a huge role in your door's ability to keep burglars at bay. You don't want a flimsy strike plate. Instead you'll want to install a deeper box strike (the steel pocket that the deadbolt fits into).

And you'll want to make sure this is secured with 3 1/2" screws that will go all the way into your home's wall studs. As always, you've got to be aware of the weakest link. The best door and lock won't do much if it's not held in place securely. A good lock that's installed with a deep box strike can eliminate "lock bumping," a fairly recent trend that makes it easy for burglars to quickly break into homes without the use of a lot of special equipment.

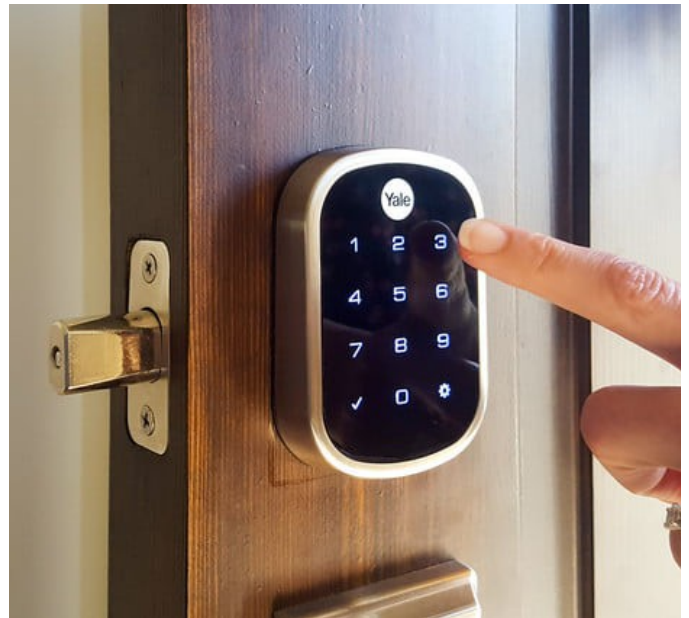
Clear Line of Sight

We all like making the entry to our homes attractive and appealing. Often that means using flowers and shrubs to decorate around the front door. That's fine, but make sure that your shrubs and flowers don't obscure the view from the street. You don't want to provide an intruder with covering to hide his attempts at entering your home. Check this yourself. Walk out into the street so that you have the same view as your neighbors or a patrolling police car. If you can't clearly see someone standing at your front door, make some changes.



Don't Forget the Back Door

Although the front door is the main entry point for most break-ins, the back door is also popular. As with the front door, you'll want to make sure the view of your back door is not obscured—giving burglars a place to hide. For many of us, our back doors are sliding doors. Check to be sure any sliding doors are made from reinforced glass or a tough plastic such as polycarbonate. One simple way to make back door break-ins tougher is to insert a 3/4" or 1" dowel in the door's track when it's not in use. Cut the dowel so that it's easy for you to insert, but doesn't leave too much slack (usually 1/4" is about right).



Added Value

A lot of homeowners aren't aware that replacing the front door adds significantly to the value of your home. Forbes recently reported that replacing the entry door is one of the best home improvements you can make—with a 98 percent return on investment!

Want to Go Beyond the First Line of Defense?

Making sure you have a secure front (and rear) door is a great way to establish your first line of defense for your home. There are, however, other steps you can take to ensure the safety of your family, your home, and your possession. One of the best ways to protect your home is with an affordable, state-of-the-art home security that protects your home 24-7 365 days of the year. That not only protects you and your home while you're there—but also while you're away. You can add features that match your specific needs and budget (including features that allow you to control heat, cooling, lights, and door locks via your smart phone or tablet no matter where you are). You can even select options that allow you to use video to monitor activity at your home when you're not there.

*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*

