

Tallahsee Police Department

(334) 283-6586 or 911 Emergency Only

TIPS

The burglary basics:

- Make your home look occupied, and make it difficult to break in.
- Lock all outside doors and windows before you leave the house or go to bed. Even if it is for a short time, lock your doors.
- Leave lights on when you go out. If you are going to be away for a length of time, connect some lamps to automatic timers to turn them on in the evening and off during the day.
- Keep your garage door closed and locked.
- Don't allow daily deliveries of mail, newspapers or flyers build up while you are away. Arrange with the Post Office to hold your mail, or arrange for a friend or neighbor to take them regularly.
- Arrange for your lawn to be mowed if you are going away for an extended time.
- Check your locks on doors and windows and replace them with secure devices as necessary.
- Pushbutton locks on doorknobs are easy for burglars to open. Install deadbolt locks on all your outside doors.
- Sliding glass doors are vulnerable. Special locks are available for better security.
- Other windows may need better locks. Check with a locksmith or hardware store for alternatives.

Don't tempt a thief:

- Lawn mowers, snow blowers, barbecues and bicycles are best stored out of sight.
- Always lock your garden sheds and garages.
- Use curtains on garage and basement windows.
- Never leave notes on your door such as "Gone shopping."

Locks...get the best:

- No lock, regardless of its quality, can be truly effective. Key-in dead bolt locks provide minimum security. Ask a locksmith for advice on your situation.
- Change locks immediately if your keys are lost or stolen.
- When moving into a new home, have all locks changed.

Targeting the Outside:

- Have adequate exterior lighting. A motion-sensitive light is recommended for backyards.
- Trim trees and shrubs so that they cannot be used as hiding places for intruders.
- Make sure your door hinges are on the inside.

Windows:

- Most windows can be pinned for security.
- Drill a 3/16" hole on a slight downward slant through the inside window frame and halfway into the outside frame - place a nail in the hole to secure the window.

Alarms:

- An alarm system is excellent for home security. It provides peace of mind to homeowners, especially while on vacation. There is a wide variety of alarm systems on the market.
- Make several inquiries to different companies for the best security system available to you.

If Your Home Is Broken Into:

If you come home to find an unexplained open/broken window or door:

- Do not enter - the perpetrator may still be inside.
- Use a neighbor's phone to call police.
- Do not touch anything or clean up until the police have inspected for evidence.
- Write down the license plate numbers of any suspicious vehicles.
- Note the descriptions of any suspicious persons.

Other precautions you should take:

- Never leave keys under doormats, flowerpots, mailboxes or other "secret" hiding places -- burglars know where to look for hidden keys.
- Keep a detailed inventory of your valuable possessions, including a description of the items, date of purchase and original value, and serial numbers, and keep a copy in a safe place away from home -- this is a good precaution in case of fires or other disasters. Make a photographic or video record of valuable objects, heirlooms and antiques. Your insurance company can provide assistance in making and keeping your inventory.
- Trim your shrubbery around your home to reduce cover for burglars.
- Be a good neighbor. If you notice anything suspicious in your neighborhood, call 911 immediately.
- Mark your valuables with your driver's license number with an engraver you can borrow from your precinct. Marked items are harder for a burglar to dispose of and easier for police to recover.
- Form a Neighborhood Watch Group. We can help you work with your neighbors to improve security and reduce risk of burglary.
- Consider installing a burglar alarm system.

The MOST important thing YOU can do is CALL THE POLICE to report a CRIME or any SUSPICIOUS activity. You have to be the eyes of your neighborhood. And remember you can always remain a pair of anonymous eyes!

Remember the three L's of Crime Prevention: **LIGHTS, LOCKS & the LAW!**

Light up your residence, **lock** your doors at all times, and call the **Law** when you see something suspicious.

VICTIMIZED? What do you do NOW?

- Remain calm. Try not to panic or show any signs of anger or confusion.
- If the attacker is after your property, don't resist. That watch, car, money - whatever is replaceable - YOU ARE NOT!
- Don't escalate this crime into a violent encounter. But NEVER let your assailant take you to another location. Your chance of survival is slim.
- Make an effort to get an accurate description of your attacker: age, sex, race, complexion, body build, height, weight, type and color of clothing.
- Call the police immediately, identify yourself and give your exact location. Do not leave the scene.

When you call **911** you will be asked several questions by the Call Taker. Be patient. While you are answering their questions they are keying in your information and dispatching the next available car. Any information you can provide to the dispatcher may help the officer en route to your call with apprehending the suspect.

Be ready to provide the following information:

- Your Name
- Address
- Phone Number
- What Happened? Describe the event in as brief manner as possible.
- When Did it Happen? Tell if the crime is in progress or when it occurred.
- Who Did It? Name or describe the suspect or vehicle, if there is one.
- Where Did They Go? Which way and how did they leave?

Wait for the officer to arrive or to call you back. The time it takes for an officer to arrive will depend on many factors. All of our calls are prioritized by emergency status. A theft of a lawn mower may be aggravating but it is not an emergency. When the officer arrives they may ask you questions similar to those asked earlier. Please be patient so the officer can help you.

Are You INVOLVED? Join Neighborhood Watch

Know your neighbors. Consider forming a **Neighborhood Watch Group** in your neighborhood. **Join your Tallassee Citizens Academy. Call Officer D. Rock at (334) 283-6586**

Out on the TOWN? Don't lose your Ride!

Remove your keys and lock your doors when leaving your vehicle. It only takes seconds to steal a locked car without the keys - why make it easier for a thief by leaving the keys in the car? And NEVER leave extra keys inside the vehicle or under the hood.

Secure your valuables in your trunk or take them with you. Don't create temptation by leaving valuables within view inside your vehicle.

When returning to your vehicle at night, be aware of your surroundings. Look underneath and inside your vehicle before entering.

You make the CALL! Be our EYES & Ears

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Business SOLUTIONS? Join Business Watch

Although most of these tips apply to homeowners, businesses can apply them to their anti-crime efforts, too.

Getting PERSONAL? It's a Need to Know thing!

- Stay alert by being aware of your surroundings.
 - Walk everywhere with a sense of purpose - show you are calm, confident and know where you are going.
 - Go with your gut feelings - if you feel uncomfortable, leave.
 - Carry your purse firmly and close to your body or better yet leave it at home and only carry what you need in your pocket - such as a small amount of money, keys, and maybe one credit card.
 - Keep your wallet in an inside coat or side trouser pocket.
 - Have your car or house key in your hand as you approach the door. If attacked use those keys as weapons!
 - Park in well-lighted areas that will be well-lighted when you return. Be sure to lock your car doors. If you jog, do not jog alone in isolated areas.
 - Do not hitchhike and never pick up hitchhikers.
 - Only list your last name and first initial in the phone book and on mail boxes.
 - Ask the phone company to not list your address in the book.
 - If you are concerned about crime and must go out, use the buddy system. Take a friend on that jog around your neighborhood. You'll both benefit from it!
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Crime Tips

At HOME? Protect Your Residence!

Lock your doors and windows when leaving your residence. Most residential burglaries occur during the daytime.

Know who is at your door before opening it. Screen doors and chain locks provide false security.

Obtain identification. If they show you an ID for a service company (i.e. Cable, phone, etc.) call their employer and verify who they are and why they are at your door. Consider installing peepholes in all entryway doors.

Mark your property with your Driver License number, that way it can be traced ONLY to you if it is stolen. (You can borrow an engraver from any one of our precincts!)

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ALARMED? Are you being Monitored?

Prior to installing home-security devices - think fire safety first. Would the device prevent you from getting out of your home? Do you have pet doors? They provide entry for pets, but they may also provide entry for criminals.

Privacy fences give you privacy, but they also give the criminal concealment from outside view. Secure your garage door, even when you are at home. Burglaries and thefts take minutes or even seconds to commit.

DON'T open your door until you know who is there. When you are not home, leave lamps on timers and consider leaving a radio or television on.

Consider leaving porch lights on at night. LIGHTING is one of the most INEXPENSIVE crime deterrents.

Secure your keys and keep them out of view. NEVER place identification tags on your key rings. Treat your garage door opener like your keys.

NEVER leave your garage door opener inside a vehicle which is parked outside. Keep trees and shrubbery trimmed for better visibility.

Keep windows clear and free of shrubbery and debris. Overgrowth may provide hiding places for criminals.

On VACATION? Don't get Tripped Out!

When leaving town, have a trusted friend or neighbor take care of your home. NEVER cancel general deliveries such as mail, milk, newspapers and other services when leaving town or going on vacation. But don't let those newspaper deliveries pile up either.

If you will be away for an extended period arrange to have a neighbor cut your lawn. If you can, also have them move your car in the driveway so it appears you are still coming and going as usual.

And NEVER leave your porch light on ONLY when you go on vacation. This tells a thief come on in...we are on vacation!
