

Home Security

Most burglaries are committed by opportunist thieves looking for the easiest way of getting into your home without being seen or disturbed.

Look at your home through the eyes of a burglar. Are there places where a burglar could break into your home without being seen? How would you get in if you had forgotten your keys? If you could get inside, so could a burglar.

Follow the advice on this page to help secure your home.

During the winter

- As the nights get darker earlier, leave a light on inside your home. Remember to choose low energy lamps.
- Use a timer switch to operate the lights as it starts to get dark. Change the times that the lights come on to simulate an occupied home.
- Make sure your front door is well lit. Use dusk to dawn lighting that automatically comes on as it gets dark.
- Make sure you keep your doors and windows locked at all times.

Windows and doors security

- When you go out, always close and lock external doors and windows, even if you are just going out for a short time.
- Fit a five lever mortice lock (British Standard 3621) to all exterior wooden doors. If you are having new windows and doors installed, ensure they are certified to British Standard 7950 (windows) or PAS 24 (doors)
- UPVC or composite doors have multi-locking systems, but it is strongly recommended they are fitted with an anti-snap lock cylinder (TS007) of 3* standard as a minimum
- Window locks can be seen from outside and could deter a burglar from forcing the window
- If you have deadlocks, use them. They make it more difficult for a thief to get out again. But don't leave the key near the door or in an obvious place nearby
- If you have a flat roof extension the windows above it should always be locked

Keeping keys safe

- Ensure your keys are kept in a safe place out of sight and well away from your letterbox
- Don't tag keys so they can be easily identified
- Keep all spare keys in a safe place
- Don't leave spare keys outside or in a garage or shed
- Consider buying a safe for personal papers, passports and small items of jewellery. This must be secured to the floor or a wall

Security outside your home

- Never leave garages or sheds unlocked, especially if they connect to your property
- Visible burglar alarms and carefully directed security lighting can deter burglars. Make sure alarms stop sounding after 20 minutes and lights don't disturb your neighbours

Living in a flat or shared housing

- Consider having a phone entry system fitted to the main door of your building
- Never buzz open the door for strangers, or hold open the door for someone you don't know
- Get home contents insurance

Going on holiday

- Suspend any deliveries, such as milk and newspapers
- Ask a friend or neighbour to keep an eye on your property
- Try to make your home look occupied while you are not there. Use timer switches on lamps or your radio

Marking your property

Below are some examples of how you can mark or register your property to ensure it is returned to you if it is ever stolen.

Ultraviolet or invisible marking

It can only be seen by an ultraviolet lamp, although it does fade over time and can be washed off eventually.

Permanent marking

Suitable for hard surfaces by engraving or etching.

Tracking for laptops and smartphones

These can now be traced if stolen by using online tracking software, which is usually free. Search online and register your laptop or phone.

Know your IMEI number.

Intruder alarms

- If you don't have an intruder alarm installed, we would suggest that you consider having one installed. Intruder alarms may prevent intruders from breaking into your home as a visible deterrent. Alternatively, if an intruder does attempt to break into your home the alarm activating may scare them off.
- If you are considering buying a new intruder alarm, it's a good idea to obtain at least three quotes from industry approved installers or talk to your insurer who may have some recommendations.

There are three types of Intruder Alarm available:

- Monitored alarm - If the system is breached, a monitoring station informs the key holders and Police within minutes.
- Audible only alarm - If activated, an alarm sound will alert your neighbours.
- Auto-dialling alarm - If the alarm is activated, the sound will alert your neighbours and the system will dial a series of telephone numbers.

Doorbell camera

Another device that is being used in conjunction with CCTV and security alarms is a doorbell camera. One NHW approved device is the Doorcam (leaflet attached). These type of devices allow you to answer your door from anywhere in your house or garden, or anywhere in the world, using your Smartphone. Someone rings your doorbell and you will get a notification on the App on your phone, you'll get HD video of your caller and two-way audio to talk to them live. Video doorbells look just like an ordinary doorbell, that will trigger recording as soon as anyone opens your gate via the motion sensor on certain models. They are easy to install and can be powered from your existing doorbell wiring or simply plugged in to the nearest wall socket. It connects to your home Wi-Fi network and is safe and secure using data encryption. These can be checked and monitored by you or by friends and family and allow you to talk to the person at the door from the comfort of your sofa or from anywhere else in the world and the person at the door would be none the wiser you are not home.

Bogus callers and distraction burglary

Most people who call at your home will be genuine. But sometimes, people turn up unannounced, with the intention of tricking their way into your home. They are known as 'bogus callers' or 'distraction burglars', whose only aim is to get into your home by distracting you to steal money or valuables.

Bogus callers sometimes work in pairs or even teams and are often well organised. One will distract you while the other searches the house for money or other valuables. They can be men, women or children (or often a combination). Watch out for anyone who says they are in a hurry. Don't let them pressure or confuse you.

Bogus callers may pose as water, electricity or gas-board workers, council workers or even police officers. Always ask the caller for their identification, and check it, before letting them in.

Use the phone number in the phone book, not the one on their identity card. Remember, a genuine caller will happily wait outside while you check on them by calling their organisation and or calling a family member or neighbour.

To reduce the risk of becoming a victim of this crime, remember the following four steps:

- **Lock** all doors – even when you are at home
- **Stop** before you open the door, ask them who they are
- **Chain** – always use a door chain or spy hole
- **Check** – Not sure who they are? Don't open the door!

Advice

- You could put a 'no cold callers' sign up on your door or window, which should deter any cold callers from knocking on your door. These are available from myself or the NHW team.
- If you're not sure who is at your door, don't open it! Follow the Lock, Stop, Chain and Check advice.
Telephone a neighbour or friend nearby to come along and check out the caller before you open the door to them.
- Many utility service providers like gas, electricity and water, provide password schemes or hotline numbers for customers to call so you can check the identity of callers before opening the door. Speak to your utility provider for more details and set up a password today.
- Don't keep large quantities of cash at home; put it in the bank or post office where it is safe.
- Keep doors locked and windows secure at all times, even when you're at home. Always keep your door chain on.
- If somebody asks for your help, needs to make a telephone call, needs a drink or requests a pen and paper for example, assist them through a closed door, or call a friend or neighbour to come and assist.

Be a good neighbour

Who to contact to report suspicious activity or a crime?

- If there is a threat to life or public safety, or a crime may be in progress dial 999
- To report a crime other than a crime in progress call 101.
- To report a crime other than a crime in progress you can also go to www.kent.police.uk/report to report your crime on line

DOORCAM

THE SMART WAY TO ANSWER YOUR DOOR



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WHEN
YOU'RE
OUT**

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ERA

Find out more at
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Don't let them in.

Samantha's story...



A few weeks ago I arrived home from work and instantly knew something was wrong. Then I saw the mess. I must have gone into shock because I felt like I was living in a bubble for a few days. Now I may never see what was taken again. Some of my mother's jewellery, my laptop, my designer bag.

But it's what those items mean to me which makes it worse and knowing I could've helped prevent it.

The expensive items I'd saved up so long to buy. All of my family photos. Things that held so much sentimental value.

Whoever it was got in round the back. My curtains were still drawn so it was obvious I'd left in a hurry. The side gate was left open after putting the bins out too. They even used my garden tools to break the back door.

They knew what they were doing, it was daylight. They saw an easy opportunity and took it.



Light it

- ✓ Light dark or hidden entrances with low wattage security lighting
- ✓ Use timer switches to turn on lights/radio – invest in a 24-hour segment timer for under £5. Remember to use an energy efficient light bulb



Lock it

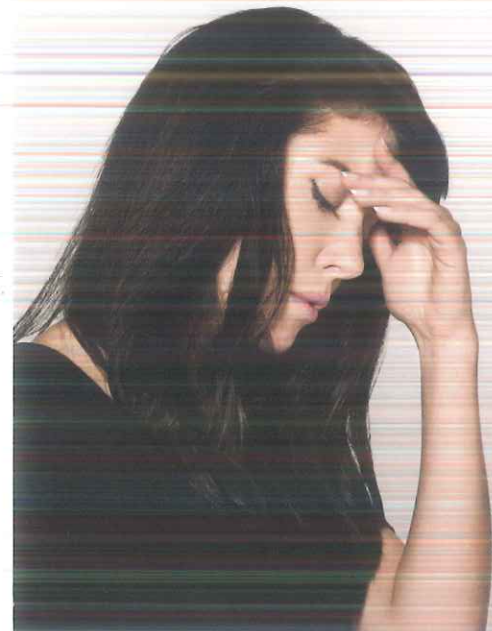
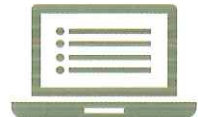
- ✓ Keep your front and back windows and doors locked (double lock uPVC)
- ✓ Keep side gates locked – burglars often break into homes from the garden where they have less chance of being seen
- ✓ If bins are emptied before you leave for work return them to your garden – they can be used as climbing aids if left on display
- ✓ Instead use bins as obstructions in side entrances
- ✓ Trim high hedging/plant growth – they could provide cover for a burglar
- ✓ Secure your garage and shed – items inside can be just as tempting and can even be used to break in
- ✓ If you get the train ensure your car is locked, windows are closed and keys are not left on display through windows
- ✓ Don't keep large amounts of money or jewellery at home. If you have to, use a safe that is stored out of sight and fixed to a solid floor



List it

All valuable items should be registered for free on **www.immobilise.com** – logging details helps us to return them to you if we find or seize them. These include:

- ✓ Expensive jewellery and antiques
- ✓ Bicycles
- ✓ Laptops, desktop computers and tablets
- ✓ Mobile phones and MP3 players
- ✓ Home entertainment systems including TVs and games consoles



How to check the security of **your** home

This checklist will help you check how secure your home is, and gives useful advice on ways to reduce opportunities for thieves.

For more home security advice visit www.securedbydesign.com or call **101** to contact your crime prevention design advisor.

Check the front of your property

Is your front door...

If 'no', consider that:

Visible from the footpath at the front of your home?	Yes/No	It may deter thieves if visitors at your front door can be seen by neighbours or passers by
Fitted with a rim latch and mortice deadlock that complies with British Standards Institution (BSI) requirements, see www.bsigroup.com	Yes/No	This is the best type of security for your home; British Standard locks have been security tested and are the basic standard you should have on a main door
Fitted with a spy hole?	Yes/No	Spy holes allow you to view a visitor before opening the door
Fitted with a door chain?	Yes/No	Door chains enable you to open your door and check ID without giving visitors access

Check your windows and patio doors

Are your windows...

If 'no', consider that:

Fitted with locks?	Yes/No	Window locks restrict access to your property
Fully closed and locked when your property is unoccupied?	Yes/No	Windows should be fully closed and locked with keys to keep thieves out
Fully closed and locked when you go to bed or are in your garden?	Yes/No	Keeping your windows on the latch does not mean they are secure

Are your patio doors...

If 'no', consider that:

Fitted with anti-lift devices on sliding doors, and additional locks?	Yes/No	These measures can reduce the risk of your patio doors being levered and lifted out
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Check the rear of your property

Burglars often enter properties from the rear, where they are less likely to be spotted by other people.

Is your back door...

If 'no', consider that:

Fitted with a five-lever mortice sash lock that complies with British Standards Institution (BSI) requirements see www.bsigroup.com	Yes/No	British Standard locks have been security tested and are the basic standard you should have on a main door
Fitted with a pair of stout bolts at the top and the bottom?	Yes/No	Bolts will enhance your home security and protect your door from being levered open

To the rear, do you have...

If 'no', consider that:

A lockable gate?	Yes/No	Gates locked from inside will restrict entry to your garden
A solid fence or hedge enclosing your garden?	Yes/No	Secure boundaries can prevent access from unwanted visitors
Trellis work or thorny plants along your garden boundaries?	Yes/No	Obstacles that prevent climbing are useful, particularly if you border alleyways or open fields

Home security measures

Do you have...

If 'no', consider that:

Security lights fitted to the front or rear of the property?	Yes/No	Lights can deter thieves and ensure entry points to your home are visible in the dark
Motion sensors to switch lights on automatically?	Yes/No	Lights turning on will alert you to movement outside
A burglar alarm fitted?	Yes/No	Alarms may deter thieves and can alert you, and others, if there are intruders about
Smoke detectors fitted on each floor of your home?	Yes/No	Smoke alarms can save your life – make sure you test them weekly and change batteries yearly or when needed

Unfortunately, I do not recognise you.

I am calling my neighbour who will come and speak to you, please wait outside for them.

They will check your identity, if you don't have this, you will not be allowed to enter.



**Kent
Police**



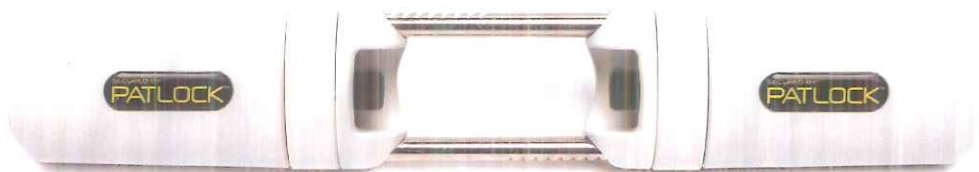
Please leave me your contact details and you will be contacted to make an appointment to return at a later date.

If you think there is a threat to life or public safety, please dial **999**.



**Kent
Police**





Deter and stop would be intruders, the Patlock provides extra security and instant peace of mind for homeowners.

The Patlock is easy to fit and works by holding the door handles in place. Ensuring the door mechanism cannot be opened, even if the locks are snapped or removed.

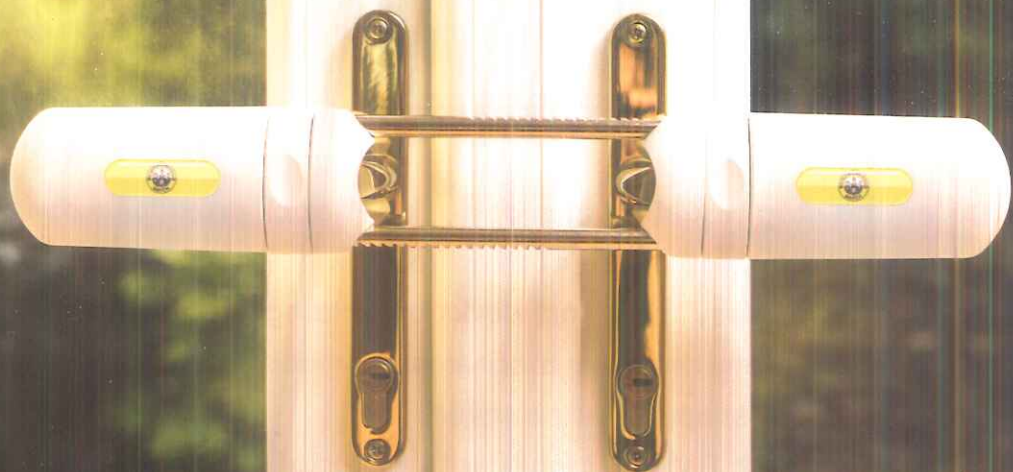
In addition, each Patlock comes with a pair of tamper resist spindles to improve security.



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Police Preferred Specification



Some people forget to fully lock their doors



Lift & Lock

Whether you are indoors, in the garden or just popping out, the only way to keep your property safe is to turn the key to lock the door.

Remember

1. Make sure that your door is shut securely
2. Push the handle up to engage the bolts
3. Turn the key to lock it



**Kent
Police**

www.kent.police.uk/burglary

www.immobilise.com

TO PROTECT IT REGISTER IT



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Kent Police