



BURGLARY DWELLING

It pays to secure your home. Insurance companies offer discounts to houses with alarms and good quality locks. It can also help if you're part of a Home Watch group.

External doors and windows

Locks depend on the quality of wood in the door and frame. Consider getting a builder or joiner to secure the door frame to the brickwork before fitting any extra locks.

- Mortice locks add extra protection to your doors. Choose locks that conform to British Standards (BS3621) - or one that has at least five levers. Check the door is thick enough to accept the lock and keep its strength. Speak to a qualified locksmith for advice.
- Mortise bolts are useful, but not suitable on doors you



regularly use to leave your house.

- Patio doors can be protected by fitting purpose-made locks or a security bar. Talk to a locksmith for advice.
- French windows: the lock securing one door into the other is only as strong as the door. Fit mortise bolts to the top and bottom of each opening door. Bolts should be fitted to go into the frame – not the other door.

- Window locks that pull the window into the frame with a key are normally stronger.
- Double glazing: check that it's not just the handle that stops a window from opening. You should need a key to unlock the window. Look for the following British Standards when choosing double glazing: BS 7950 (security performance); BS 7412 (window performance).

Burglar alarms

There are lots of things to consider when choosing a burglar alarm. An alarm puts off thieves and gets them to leave without exploring the rest of the house. There are two types of alarm systems Remote signalling alarms (Type A alarms) and Audible only alarms (Type B alarms).

House keys

- Don't leave spare keys about your home. They are always best left with a neighbour, friend or relative.
- If a burglar enters your home using your lost or stolen keys you may find you're not insured. Similarly, if a vehicle is stolen using your keys you may not be insured.
- The best place for a door key is with you or at the side of your bed.

Car keys

Many cars are difficult to steal without the keys. Criminals now break-in to houses to obtain them. They can do this by:

- Fishing through a letterbox to get keys off a table or stairs
- Reaching through a cat-flap
- Forcing or smashing a window or door to grab keys on view
- On rare occasions - especially where the vehicle is particularly valuable - threatening the resident for the keys

It's simple: put your keys somewhere safe and out of sight.

Safes

Most domestic safes are designed not to be seen. Always check with your insurance company first to see what type of safe they recommend.

Dogs

Don't rely on a dog to protect your house. Having a pet should not stop you investing in a burglar alarm. There are plenty of pet-friendly alarm systems available.

CCTV

This is becoming more popular as costs reduce. However, there are many issues to consider before getting CCTV installed in your home.

Beware of fire

Good security is designed to stop burglars getting in – not people getting out. Always close (but don't lock) internal doors at night. They hold fire at bay and give you valuable time in the event of a fire. Always keep your keys close to make sure you're not delayed in an emergency. Fit a smoke alarm to give an early fire warning.