

SECURING YOUR PROPERTY

A significant proportion of all house break-ins/burglaries are opportunistic. That is, in most cases thieves enter properties through open doors and windows, or by forcing poorly secured doors or windows. As a community, we all have a responsibility to reduce opportunities for offenders by taking a few simple precautions when it comes to securing our homes, vehicles and their contents.

The following guidelines will help you to evaluate just how secure your property is and what you can do to improve your current security arrangements.

Outside Your Home

- ↪ Your house number should be clearly visible from the street, eg. on the kerb, fence, house or letter box. This is particularly important in the case of emergencies.
- ↪ Make sure you can see your front door and windows from the street by trimming your trees and shrubs and choosing a suitable fence design.
- ↪ Keep both your vehicle and your garage locked - even when you are at home.

Lighting

- ↪ Consider installing a light over your front entrance with an inside switch so you can see night time visitors.
- ↪ Consider installing movement sensitive lighting which will turn on automatically when somebody arrives.

Doors

- ↪ External doors should be of solid construction. If you have a hollow door, consider fitting a high quality security door which carries the Australian Standards trademark.
- ↪ If you want to leave your front or back doors open, fit high quality security doors.
- ↪ When at home, secure your doors from the inside.
- ↪ Plan how you would get out quickly in an emergency.
- ↪ If you do not have security doors, have a door viewer (peephole) installed to external doors so you can identify visitors.
- ↪ Fit external doors with deadlocks where possible. Have them keyed alike so that one key opens them all.

Windows

- ↪ Fit key operated locks on all windows. Where possible, have them keyed alike so that one key opens them all.
- ↪ Fit high quality security grills to louvre windows or windows that you want to leave open for ventilation. One or two of these grills should be hinged so you can get out quickly in an emergency.

When You Go Out

- ↪ Make it look as if someone is still at home: leave a light, radio or television on even if you are only going out for a short time.
- ↪ Consider buying an automatic timer to turn your lights, television or radio on and off when you are away from home for extended periods.
- ↪ Always lock all doors and windows, even if you are only popping out to the local shops or a friend's place nearby.
- ↪ Make sure you lock away garden tools, wheelie bins and ladders if you plan to be away from home - even if it is only for a matter of hours.
- ↪ Do not leave messages on external doors for friends or family.
- ↪ Never leave a key under a door mat, flower pot or other obvious hiding places. If necessary leave a spare key with a trusted neighbour or friend.



Securing Your Valuables

Engraving or marking your valuables leaves no doubt as to ownership. It deters others from taking your property as it is far more difficult for a thief to 'off load' identifiable property. It also helps police to recover stolen items and return them to their rightful owners.

It is also important to maintain a detailed inventory of all your valuable property. This needs to include the serial number, make, model and a full description of each item. It is also a good idea to include details of all electrical appliances as compliance stickers and plates can be easily removed after theft. When your inventory is complete, make sure you keep it in a safe place - a home safe, or safety deposit box at your local bank. Your inventory will not only help police to recover stolen items, but will be of great assistance should you need to lodge an insurance claim.

Items Most Commonly Stolen

The items listed below are those most often stolen. It is therefore important that you mark as many of these items as possible, regardless of value. Check off each item on your list after marking.

Inside

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Television | <input type="checkbox"/> Binoculars | <input type="checkbox"/> Antiques |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Microwave | <input type="checkbox"/> Kitchen appliances | <input type="checkbox"/> Typewriter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sporting goods | <input type="checkbox"/> Computer equipment | <input type="checkbox"/> Musical equipment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Video equipment | <input type="checkbox"/> Radio | <input type="checkbox"/> Camera |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clothing | <input type="checkbox"/> Furniture | <input type="checkbox"/> Clocks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stereo equipment | <input type="checkbox"/> CD's and cassettes | |

Outside

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Power tools | <input type="checkbox"/> Trailer | <input type="checkbox"/> Garden tools |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Welder | <input type="checkbox"/> Tools boxes | <input type="checkbox"/> Lawn mower |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chainsaw | <input type="checkbox"/> Bicycles | <input type="checkbox"/> Rotary hoe |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Slasher | | |

In the Car

- | | | |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> CD's and cassettes | <input type="checkbox"/> Speakers | <input type="checkbox"/> Tools |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Battery | <input type="checkbox"/> Two way radio | <input type="checkbox"/> Mag wheels |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tool Box | <input type="checkbox"/> Radio/Cassette/CD player | |

On the Farm

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tractor | <input type="checkbox"/> Chainsaw | <input type="checkbox"/> Welder |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Slasher | <input type="checkbox"/> Horse float | <input type="checkbox"/> Water pump |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rotary hoe | <input type="checkbox"/> Stock crates | |

Property Identification

Property identification involves marking your property with a personal code, for example, many people use their driver's licence number. Another method is to use the first initial of your christian name and surname, date of birth, and the letter Q which signifies Queensland.

For example: Cameron Edward Peters, Date of Birth 01-08-74

His personal code would be: CP010874Q

When you have determined the code, note it down on your inventory of valuables and keep it in a safe place.

Marking Your Property

Engravers are available from your local police station or Neighbourhood Watch Zone Coordinator. Make sure you seek advice on operating the engraver before you begin. Where possible, place your identification code in the top right hand rear corner of the item. For items such as trailers, tractors, farm machinery or tools, you can cold stamp or weld your identification code on.

Of course not all items are suitable for marking with an electric engraver.

Items not suitable for engraving:

- × Jewellery
- × Watches
- × Silverware
- × Furs
- × Antiques
- × Paintings
- × Stamp and coin collections

In some instances, you may be able to mark such items with an ultra violet pen. Alternatively, these sorts of items should be photographed or video taped with a ruler or match box beside them to assist in determining size. These photographs (or the negatives) should then be retained with your inventory.



How Secure is Your Home?

Use this quick checklist to review your home security.

	Yes	No
Is your house number clearly visible from the street?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can offenders be seen in your yard?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have an automatic light timer or sensor activated lights?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you leave lights on when you go out?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have a phone extension in your bedroom?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you keyed emergency numbers into your touchphone?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are your front and rear doors solid core?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are your doors fitted with deadlocks or deadbolts?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have quality security doors?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If you do not have security doors, are peepholes fitted?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are windows fitted with key operated locks or security grills?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are your door and window locks keyed alike?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If you have an alarm, is it always used and serviced regularly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is your property engraved or marked for personal identification?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is your garage locked with quality keyed locks at all times?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is your meter box locked?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is your garden shed securely locked?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>













How Did You Score?

If you answered “No” to any of these questions, you should review your security needs.

Holiday Security Precautions

A house left empty for some time is a prime target for intruders because chances are they will not be disturbed and any offence may go undetected for days, perhaps weeks. When you go on holiday, it is important that you do not leave behind any clues that will tempt an intruder.

The Queensland Police Service has developed the following guidelines to reduce the chance of your house being broken into whilst away.

-  Check that **all** windows and doors are securely locked.
-  Ask neighbours to watch out for visitors, collect junk mail/newspapers etc.
-  Ask a neighbour or friend to mow the lawn and regularly water plants.
-  Secure your garbage bin - they make great ladders for potential thieves.
-  Cancel **all** deliveries, especially milk and papers.
-  Install electrical timers. By automatically switching on lights and/or the radio, your house can maintain its normal lighting schedule.
-  Disconnect radio-controlled or electronic garage doors and use a strong auxiliary keyed lock instead.
-  Turn the volume down on your telephone or have calls redirected and don't leave a message on an answering machine that tells callers you're away.
-  Advise local Police and your Neighbourhood Watch Block Coordinator of your absence and provide contact details for while you are away.
-  Lock **all** interior doors of the house and take the keys with you.
-  Install self-activating, movement sensitive lights.
-  Check the yard to ensure that no ladders or tools are accessible.

- 🔓 **Do not** leave keys concealed outside the house. Give them to a trusted friend or neighbour.
- 🔓 Ask neighbours to contact the police if they notice anything suspicious.
- 🔓 If leaving your vehicle at home, make sure it is well secured.
- 🔓 Ask a neighbour to park their car in your driveway at odd times.
- 🔓 Ensure **all** easily removable articles are marked using the Police Service property marking system.
- 🔓 Lock valuables away in a safe or leave them in a safety deposit box at your bank.



Holiday Security Check List

Have you:-

	Yes	No
Locked all windows with key operated locks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Locked all external doors?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advised local Police that you will be away?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Locked all tools away?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cancelled milk and paper deliveries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cancelled or redirected mail?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asked a neighbour or friend to collect junk mail?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disconnected the electrical supply on electric garage doors?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Locked valuables in a safe or bank safe deposit box?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asked a trusted friend to park a car in your driveway?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Arranged for a friend or neighbour to mow your lawn?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Installed automatic timing devices to switch lights on and off?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Turned down the volume of your telephone?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Locked all internal doors?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Left the house looking like it is 'lived in'?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

How Did You Score?

If you answered "No" to any of these questions, you should review your security before going away.

REMEMBER...

A good neighbour can be as effective as a Police Patrol in protecting your home while you're away. However, if you do come home and find any evidence to suggest that someone has broken into your home, **do not enter** and do not touch anything, go next door and call the Police.