



Crime Bulletin

10 Simple Ways to Discourage Burglaries



Did you know that last year in Wisconsin there were almost 140,000 property crimes investigated by law enforcement! Of those crimes, victims reported losses at more than \$117 million! Many of these crimes are preventable and by changing a few habits we can reduce these numbers!

Take a look at these ten ideas to discourage these criminals.

- **Lock It Up.** More than 40 percent of break-ins happen without the use of force. That means a lot of people are leaving their houses without locking the doors and windows.
- **Keep That Snow or Lawn Service Coming.** A home that looks occupied discourages burglaries from entering.
- **Know Your Neighbors.** Tell a trusted neighbor you'll be away. Closer-knit neighborhoods generally report fewer break-ins because strangers will stick out, and people are more likely to keep a casual eye on other people's security. Neighborhood Watch Programs, started in the 1960s, can be very effective at lowering and preventing crime.
- **Prepare Before Vacation.** If you are going out of town for an extended period of time, call your local police and let them know. Also, alert neighbors you trust about your trip and ask that they keep an eye on your property during that time. More importantly, when you leave town, don't leave signs of an empty house. That will only make your house look like a giant bulls-eye to a thief.
- **Get Help from You Local Crime Prevention Officer.** Police can help you stop crime before it happens, rather than just responding to it. For instance, if you're leaving town for a while, let the police know and request that they drive by your property to check on things. Many police stations also offer free security evaluations for your property. Ask a crime prevention officer, if he or she can survey your property and help you identify any security steps you can implement.




- **Secure Your Yard.** Tall shrubs and overgrown trees are welcome hiding places for criminals to wait until the coast is clear to get into your house. That doesn't mean you need to cut down every plant in your yard. Just keep things manicured.
- **Don't Leave a Spare Key Out.** It may seem like a good idea to leave a spare key hidden under a flower pot or doormat in case you get locked out of your house. But that's an open invitation for a burglar to walk inside without any difficulty. Someone could also see you retrieve the key at some point, giving away your hiding place.
- **Secure Sliding Doors and Windows.** You can easily break into some older sliding doors by simply popping them off of their frame, even when locked. It's harder to do that with newer ones, but you should still take extra precaution to secure them since they can be an inviting entry for burglars. Simply take a strong dowel, steel bar or two-by-four and slide it into the back groove. That way, even if people can pick the lock, the rod stops the door from sliding back and opening.
- **Tricking Burglars.** If burglars can tell that someone is home, there's a greater chance that they won't attempt to break in. Remember, more break-ins occur during the day when many people are at work. For that reason, when you leave the house, create an illusion that someone's still there.
- **Don't Showboat.** Leaving certain things lying around your yard or in plain sight from the road can unwittingly lure thieves onto your property like frantic bargain hunters to a flea market. First, if you have a bicycle or scooter that someone could easily walk away with, roll it inside or into your garage. Also, after purchasing a new plasma screen television or other pricey electronics or appliance, don't leave the box out beside the trash can or recycling bin. That tells people you have something brand spanking new that could fetch decent dollars on the street. It may also leave them wondering what other goodies are inside your home



For more burglary prevention tips, visit the Wisconsin Crime Prevention Practitioners Association on the web! You will find home security survey samples, handouts, videos, podcasts on keeping you and your property safe!

www.wicrimeprevention.com



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If you would like further information on the burglary prevention or any other crime prevention topics, please speak to your local crime prevention officer