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Keeping people safe

POILEAS ALBA



Property & Personal Safety



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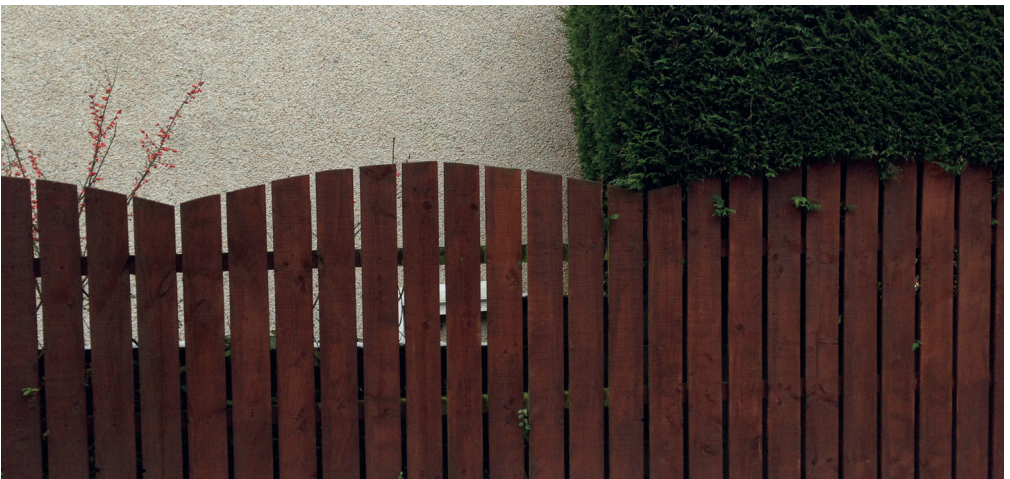


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Perimeter Security

Gates and fences are the first signs of a secure home and act as a good deterrent to intruders. Make sure they are in good repair.

1. Keeping your front gate closed sends a psychological message of privacy, so consider investing in a gate spring.
2. Ensure that side access to the rear garden is secured with a 2 metre high fence and gate. You can fix trellis topping to your fence as it makes climbing difficult.
3. Ensure ladders are put away and bins can't be turned into climbing aids
4. For a perimeter fence by a public path or other vulnerable area consider defensive or prickly shrubbery on your side of the fencing.
5. An outdoor light operated by sensors can be used to make intruders feel vulnerable and observed.
6. Illuminate areas such as the front, side and rear of your home.
7. Make sure passers-by can see the front of your home by cutting your shrubs and bushes to 1m so burglars can't work without being seen.



How to secure your doors

- When buying a new a door it is better to buy a new “door set”, the complete assembled frame and door, certified to British Standard PAS 24-1 ‘Doors of Enhanced Security’.
- If refurbishing a door check that the frame is firmly fixed and sturdy. If it is weak or rotten, replace it.
- Check that the door hinges are sturdy and secured with strong, long screws.
- For added security fit hinge bolts or security hinges. These help to reinforce the hinge side of a door against force and protect the hinge if your door opens outwards.
- If fitting locks to a standard wooden door fit a 5-lever mortise lock plus a night latch or rim lock both tested to BS 3621. These are a minimum insurance requirement.
- If your door is PVCu or Composite then it should be fitted with a Multipoint lock meeting BS 3621.
- Europrofile cylinders used on PVCu and Composite doors should meet TS007 and for additional protection use a security door handle.
- Consider fitting a cage or restrictor on your letterbox to prevent thieves from putting their hands or gadgets through the letterbox.
- If fitting an external letterbox make sure it is tested to TS009:2012 as this covers free standing or surface mounted letterboxes.
- Fit a door viewer so you can identify people before opening the door.
- Door chains can stop callers pushing their way in, but must be securely fixed to avoid screws being pulled out. They will not help secure a locked door against burglary.

How to secure your windows?

Many people focus on securing their doors and forget about their windows and secondary doors in their homes.

- When buying new windows, install windows which are certified to British Standard PAS 24: Enhanced security performance requirements for doorsets and windows in the UK.
- Window locks are essential on ground floors and above flat roofs. They can be retro fitted to many windows.
- Glazing may be protected from being smashed with the addition of accredited adhesive window film.
- Patio doors and conservatories are vulnerable so if not secure install additional locks and security blocks to stop lifting or forced entry.
- When buying patio doors ask for the sliding section to be on the inside and for anti-lift blocks. Multi-locking systems are recommended or have mortise security bolts with removable keys at the top and bottom of both doors.



Secure the Inside of your home

A home that looks empty is more likely to be targeted by a burglar, use automatic timer-switches to turn on a light and perhaps a radio when it goes dark, even for just a couple of hours.

- Take photos of your expensive items and keep copies of them with your insurance policy.
- Do not close your curtains during the daytime; this can suggest your home is empty. A pile of post on the doormat is a clear sign that you are away. Ask a trusted neighbour to clear your post away, or use Royal Mail's "keepsafe" service; they will keep your mail for up to two months.
- Beware of bogus callers; use your spy hole and a door chain until you have seen their ID and are satisfied you want to let them in.
- Never discuss your security requirements or existing arrangements with a doorstep caller or salesperson.
- Try not to keep many valuables at the home, if a storage facility can be provided by your bank or building society then this is the best option. Otherwise, an insurance rated safe should be considered comparable with or greater than the value of the contents. Safes should be installed as per the manufacturer's guidelines and securely attached to the fabric of the building. Ideally have an insurance approved installer to fit the safe within your home.
- For electronic or larger items, use a commercial or forensic marker which identifies the item as yours to increase your chance of getting it back if it's stolen.

Secure your Garages and Sheds

Gardens, sheds and garages often have expensive items such as lawn mowers, bikes and tools.

- Check your shed and garage for signs of decay, which may provide an opportunity for a thief.
- Look to strengthen the door and frame, hinges should be secured with coach bolts or non-return screws. Use strong padbars and close shackle padlocks.
- Think of securing the windows with a grills or heavy wire mesh to increase window security and the use of net curtains to deter casual viewing of your property.
- Register expensive items with a commercial database or use a forensic marker to increase your chance of getting it back if it's stolen.
- A ground anchor is a chain or strong point set into the ground to which you can secure valuable items within the shed or garage. Use one which meets Sold Secured Gold standard or Secured by Design.
- To secure an existing garage door buy a garage defender, these bolt into the ground in front of the garage and stop it from being opened until you unlock it and drop it flat. Make sure its Sold Secure silver or gold standard.
- If you have a door connecting the garage to the house make sure this has the same level of security as your front door, fitting locks that meet BS 3621, or fitting a door that meets PAS 24: 2012.

Bike and Vehicle Security

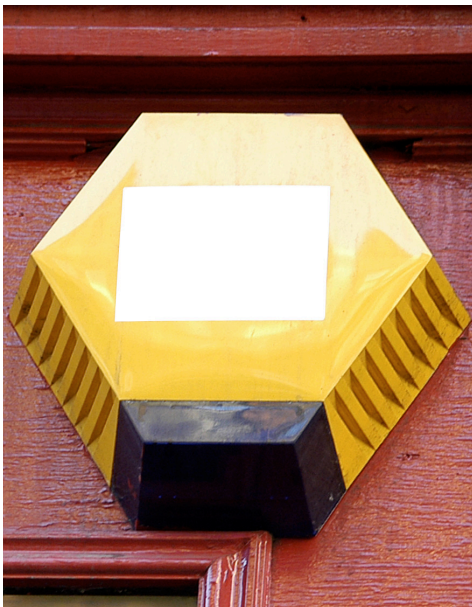
- When at home, keep your bike or motorcycle out of sight by storing it securely in a garage or shed using ground anchors or heavy chains with locks tested to Sold Secure Gold or Silver standard.
- When securing your bike remember to secure the frame to the wheels.
- Consider buying a motorbike or bicycle locker/garage that meets Secured by Design standards.
- If storing the bike outside is unavoidable, ensure you safely locate and anchor items to a secure structure with chain and padlock or bike lock which meet Secured by Design or Sold Secure gold or silver standard.
- Register it with a Secured by Design accredited forensic marking company.
- Keyless car entry vehicles can easily fall victim to a 'relay attack' whereby criminals target and steal your vehicle using electronic signal relay devices. This fools the car into thinking your car key is close and unlocks the doors allowing the criminals to steal your car with the stop/start button in under a minute. Keep your vehicle safe by placing your car fob in a metal tin within the home or consider purchasing a RFID key wallet when not in use.



Home Security Intruder Alarm

Home security alarm systems can be used to strengthen physical home security measures. They can be used as a deterrent and a means of summoning help if somebody breaks into your property.

When investing in an intruder alarm it is advisable to have it professionally installed. Do not consider cold callers or telesales inquiries and avoid when it comes to choosing your alarm company. If you have serious doubts about the legality or sales techniques contact the Police or Trading Standards for advice.



There are two main types of alarm systems to consider for your home:

Audible only

- When the alarm is activated it operates an internal and/ or external siren to call attention to the property.
- Remotely Monitored System when the alarm is activated it sends a signal to a central monitoring station who in turn will automatically call a key holder of your choice, and if you require it, the Police

If you choose a police response alarm it must be installed and maintained by a company that conforms to the ACPO security systems policy, and whose business is subject to inspection by a UKAS accredited body.

Currently only two such organisations are accepted by the Police. These organisations will give you details of member companies who operate in your local area.

The National Security

Inspectorate (NSI)

The Security Systems and Alarm Inspection Board (SSAIB)

Choosing your alarm:

- Check the address and credentials of the company and proof of identity from their representative
- Obtain written quotes from at least two companies
- Ask if they can supply you with a list of police rules for monitored alarmed premises
- Request a written confirmation that they are registered with the Police force in your area
- The company needs to operate a 24-hour call-out service and emergency attendance within four hours
- If the installation of a security system is an insurance requirement, check that the security company is acceptable to your insurer

New build Developments:

Buying a new house is the biggest expenditure that you will encounter, unfortunately home security is often the last thing on a 'to do list' for new home owners which can result in homes being targeted.

An alarm system, security lighting and securing the boundary around your property (where possible) are recommended to make your home less vulnerable.

Ensure that whilst within your home, keep your front and back doors locked and always turn your alarm system on during the night. If you have pets, there are alarm systems that are tailored to accommodate this.

Operating your home security alarm system:

- Make sure the installer explains the operation of your system
- Read the instructions and ensure you, and those who use the system are familiar with the alarm
- Arrange for a responsible person to hold keys to your home and be able to operate the alarm, if relevant
- Where audible-only systems are installed, neighbours should be aware and encouraged to report any activation that appears to be accompanied by criminal or suspicious activity, such as breaking glass, the sound of a dog barking or suspicious persons hanging around the area etc. Neighbours may choose to contact the police out with any other contributory factors
- False alarms should be investigated and the cause corrected or the system modified
- External sirens and bells should not operate for more than 20 minutes. Excessive noise and frequent false alarms can irritate neighbours and lead to complaints



Personal Safety

Always take care of your personal possessions.

What YOU can do...

Carry your bag close to you with the clasp facing inwards. Keep it zipped up, and make sure your wallet or purse can't be seen. Don't carry large amounts of cash.

Have your bags where you can see them when in public places; try to make sure that the bag strap is under a chair leg so it can't be easily taken.

If you are wearing expensive jewellery or carrying other valuables (laptops, smart phones, tablets etc), be discreet.

Think about your route especially when you are going to be on your own. Avoid dark alleyways or unlit passages.

Know how you are getting home, keep enough money for public transport and where possible, travel in groups.

Avoid wearing headphones or chatting on your mobile when walking down the street alone, as this will prevent you from being aware of your surroundings and persons in close proximity to yourself.

Places to be extra careful:

- Tubes and Railway Stations.
- In car parks.
- At cash points.
- Getting on and off buses.
- In crowded areas, especially in rush hour.
- In supermarkets and busy shopping areas.
- Public parks

