

Vacation Checklist

Vacations provide burglars with plenty of time to enter your home, remove large items and search leisurely for hidden valuables. If you are planning a vacation, take precautions to protect your home while you are away. The key is to create an illusion of everyday activity. Following this checklist will make it appear that someone is home, which is your first defense against burglary.

1. Ask police to check your home and patrol your neighborhood more closely while you are away.
2. Stop mail and newspaper deliveries, or have a trusted neighbor collect them while you are away so that they do not accumulate. Also ask your neighbor to remove any advertising flyers that are deposited in your mailbox or around your door, driveway or lawn.
3. Secure all doors, windows, pet entrances and garage doors.
4. Transfer valuables to a safety deposit box.
5. Place timers on indoor lamps and appliances to illuminate your home at night, and set timers to turn on radios and televisions randomly during the day.
6. Check that no bulbs are burned out on your indoor lamps, outdoor lighting fixtures or low voltage lighting system.
7. Arrange to have your landscaping continue and keep the lawn mowed.
8. Keep some shades and blinds up and curtains open to maintain a normal appearance.
9. Have one trusted friend check your home, inside and out, each day.
10. Remove messages from your telephone answering machine daily so that the "beep" is always short. And don't indicate on your message that you are on vacation.

...from the Burglary Prevention