

HOME SECURITY CHECKLIST



FIRST PRINCIPLE

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Top Tips

- **Make sure your boundaries and gates are secure**
- **Always lock garages, sheds and outbuildings**
- **Always lock your doors, even when you're at home**
- **Make sure your windows are secure**
- **Always leave your house looking occupied**
- **Avoid keeping cash at home**
- **Make sure you keep an inventory of valuable items**

Being burgled can be a traumatic experience, leaving people feeling violated and unsafe in their own home. However, as the majority of burglaries are opportunistic rather than planned, there are some simple steps you can take to reduce the risk of it happening to you. The most effective security consists of a variety of measures to deter, defend and detect any intruders.

Perimeter Security

Whilst people tend to think about home security being about doors and windows, it is also about creating layers of security around your home.



- All perimeters should be robust and in good condition.
- Perimeters at the front should define your boundary, but not obstruct the natural surveillance from neighbours or passers-by. They should be no more than 1 metre high.
- Rear perimeters should deter access from neighbouring properties. They should be at least 1.8 metres high. Additional height can be added to existing secure boundaries by the use of flimsy trellis to prevent climbing. Prickly plants will add a further deterrent.
- Gates should be positioned as close to the front of the house to encourage natural surveillance over them. They should be the same height as the fence and as a minimum have a robust hasp and staple and closed shackle padlock top and bottom. If you use the gate when you leave the house, the gate should be capable of being locked from both sides. Ornamental metal gates can provide an easy climbing point into the rear garden which can be minimised by attaching rigid mesh to the front of the gate.
- Check that there are no items such as trees adjacent to the fence or wheelie bins at the front of the house that could help someone climb over the gate or fence.
- If you have a shared alleyway, talk to your neighbours about putting a gate to which you all have access at the front of the alleyway, as well as having a gate into your own garden.

Garden/external area security

- Ensure that there is nothing outside your property that could be used to force entry. Items that have been used in the past

include gardening tools, bricks, ladders and heavy ornaments.

- Fine gravel on the driveway is noisy to walk on and can act as a deterrent.
- Ensure your shed/garage is secure (see Shed/garage guidance note for more details).
- Make sure you have adequate lighting. Dusk to dawn lighting to illuminate all entry points, as well as sheds and garages will provide a constant light that will deter burglars and allow you to safely investigate any suspicious noises.

Door Security

You should ensure that all external doors into your home, including front and rear doors, integral garage doors, French/patio doors and balcony doors are robust and secure.

- Keep your doors locked and remove the keys at all times, even when you are in the house. Make sure you have a fire exit plan so that everyone can leave quickly in an emergency.
- Never leave a door insecure to avoid having to get up to let

family members have access. Use a key safe or advise the person to knock on the door when they return if they cannot have their own key.

- Never hide a spare key outside. Burglars know the usual hiding places. Leave a key with a trusted neighbour or family member or have a police approved key safe fitted out of sight (see Key Safe Guidance notes for more details). If you have a multi-point locking door (as shown), make sure you lift the handle, turn the key and then remove the key to secure it. You should do this even if you can't open the door from outside without a key. This will prevent someone reaching through the letterbox or cat flap or smashing the glass and pulling the handle down to gain entry.



- If your door does not have multi-point locking, make sure you have a 5 lever mortice lock and rim lock conforming to BS3621. To check, look at the plate on the lock.
- Extra security can be achieved with hinge bolts and mortice bolts. Please be aware that mortice bolts cannot be operated from outside, so may not be appropriate for a household where people are frequently using the door at different times or where access may be required by a carer or family members not resident at the home.
- French doors that are not multi-point locking should have a BS 3621 5 lever mortice lock and hinge bolts and mortice bolts at the top and bottom of both doors. Check both doors are secure even if you only use one.



- Patio doors, especially older ones should have extra locks

added top and bottom. Check that the 'fixed' door is secure and cannot be opened.

- Stable doors should be treated as two separate doors with locks on each.
- Be extra careful to check doors like French/patio doors which may only be used infrequently and are therefore not in your normal 'locking routine'.
- If you have a porch or conservatory and internal door, lock both sets of doors. If a burglar can get into a porch and shut the door they can then work unseen on the internal front door to force entry.
- Fit a door chain/limiter and door viewer and use it each time you open the door.
- If you are buying new doors make sure that they conform to PAS 24:2016. Your supplier should be able to confirm this for you.
- Other standards are also acceptable and for more details, please see: https://www.securedbydesign.com/images/downloads/HOMES_BROCHURE_2019_NEW_version_2.pdf
- If you are replacing the 'Euro

cylinder' (the part you put the key into on a multi-point locking door) choose one that meets British Standard TS007 three star.



Communal Door Security

If you live in a flat or shared accommodation, the communal front door is the first line of defence and should always be kept secure, even if you have your own front door.

- Always secure a communal door (front or back), even if you found it open.
- Never prop a communal door open, even if you are just popping out to the bins or your car.

- Report any damage to the doors immediately to the landlord.
- Never let anyone into the block, either via tailgating or remotely via your intercom, if you don't know who they are.

Window Security

- Keep windows secure at all times – even if you are at home. Never leave a downstairs or easily accessible window open (i.e. over a flat roof) if you leave the room for any period of time.
- Keep your windows locked when not in use. Locks should be operated with keys which should be removed when not in use.
- Windows and frames should be robust and in good condition. If they do not have locks, fit locks that hold the frame and the window together. Larger windows will need several locks. For details of a local locksmith, please contact the Master Locksmiths Association at enquiries@locksmiths.co.uk or **01327 262 255**
- If you are replacing windows, make sure they conform to PAS

24:2016.

- Other standards are also acceptable and for more details, please see:

https://www.securedbydesign.com/images/downloads/HOMES_BROCHURE_2019_NEW_version_2.pdf

Alarms and CCTV

Alarms and CCTV can add an extra layer of security to your home if installed and used correctly.

- Contact the National Security Inspectorate NSI on www.nsi.org.uk 01628 637512 or the Security Systems & Alarms Inspection Board (SSAIB) on www.ssaib.org 0191 296 3242 for details of approved suppliers.
- Never use dummy items.
- Make sure you set the alarm every time the house is empty and at night if possible.
- Have some form of monitoring on the alarm – at least get a text message sent so you know if it has been activated.
- If you hear an alarm sounding, take action to investigate it

without putting yourself at risk.

- See the CCTV and Alarms guidance notes for more details.

Whilst Norfolk and Suffolk Police do not endorse specific products, we would suggest that you consider crime prevention and security products approved by 'Secured by Design' (SBD).

SBD approval means that products have been tested to a high standard and are therefore recommended by us.

Ring Doorbells are an approved SBD product:



The Ring doorbell is a doorbell which you can answer wherever you are, using the app on your phone. You will be able to see and talk to whoever is at your door even when you're away from home.

It is also a simple and effective means to monitor who is visiting your house and can store video

and audio information on the Ring cloud should it be required. Activation is by PIR sensors and the camera is designed to work in night and day situations.

More information can be found at:
<https://en-uk.ring.com/>

Make your house look occupied

- Use lights (and a radio) on timers. Use lights that would normally be on. If the only light on is a landing or hall light that can be an indication that the house is unoccupied.
- If possible, have lights on timers all the time, regardless of whether you are at home.
- Consider using a TV simulator on a timer when you are out.
- Don't leave your curtains shut during the day when you are out as this can be an obvious sign that the house is empty. If it is dark when you leave (or will shortly be) shut them before you leave.
- When you are staying away from the house, ask your trusted neighbours to keep an eye on the house. Give one trusted person a key and ask them to

collect your post and any deliveries (if you are unable to cancel them in your absence), check around the house and open and close the curtains if possible. Try and get someone to park on the drive.

- Consider joining or setting up a Neighbourhood Watch scheme. For further information please go to www.suffolknwa.co.uk

Property Marking/Registering
Marking and registering your property makes it easier for police to return it if found and may assist in a prosecution.

Register all items at:

www.immobilise.com

- Make an inventory and take photographs. Keep them somewhere safe.
- Use a permanent marker or UV to add your postcode and house number/name.
- Use forensic markers, especially for hard to mark items like jewellery.
- See the Property Marking guidance notes for more details.

Security of Valuables

- Never keep quantities of cash at home.
- Avoid hiding valuable or sentimentally important jewellery in obvious places. Burglars will normally start their search in the master bedroom, looking in drawers, the bottom of the wardrobe and under the bed for example. They may also search behind bath panels and in airing cupboards, so these places should be avoided. Avoid telling people where your valuable items are stored.
- If you have a large amount of valuable items or very high value items, keep them in a safety deposit box in a bank or have a safe installed meeting the following standard **LPS 1183: Issue 4, BS EN 1143-1: 2005. The safe must be secured to a solid floor.**
- Make sure that valuable items can't be seen from the window, especially if you live close to a footpath.
- Keep your car keys securely stored out of reach and sight of the door.

Home Security Self-Assessment

Please use this form to check how secure your own home is. If you answer **no** to any questions, please take action.

Ask the Question	Y/N	Take Action
Perimeter Security		
Can your neighbours and passers-by clearly see the front of your property?		<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Clear vegetation to below 1m.▪ Remove other obstructions.
Have you checked for climbing aids into the rear?		<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Store wheelie bins behind the gate.▪ Cover ornate metal gates with rigid mesh.▪ Cut back tree branches.
If you have a gate, is it at least 1.8m high and locked?		<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Add robust hasp and staples and closed shackle padlocks top and bottom.▪ Secure your gate so that you can lock it from both sides if you use it for access.▪ Talk to your neighbours if you share a communal access way and install a gate at the front building line.
Are the rear fences at least 1.8m high and in good condition?		<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Increase the height of fencing with flimsy trellis (and prickly plants).▪ Repair or fit new fencing if required. Screw fence panels into place.

Are there any items outside that could be used to break in with?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Remove or secure bricks, ornaments, tools etc.
Is your shed and/or garage robust and locked?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Repair or replace as required. ▪ Add robust hasp/staple and closed shackle padlocks top and bottom of shed doors. ▪ Consider an alarm and extra lighting. ▪ Lock valuable items to a secure ground anchor.
Do you have a security light at every door?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fit a dusk to dawn light.
External Doors		
Are your doors (including front, back, patio, French and integral garage) secure and in good condition?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Carry out repairs immediately. ▪ Fit a 5 lever mortice and rim lock to BS 3621. ▪ If replacing doors, choose one that meets PAS 24:2016 standard.
Do you keep your doors locked at all times?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Always lock the doors and remove the keys, even when you are in the house. ▪ Have a fire exit plan in case of emergency. ▪ Never leave doors unlocked for family members, carers etc.
If you have a multi-point locking door, do you		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If you do not, the door is not properly secure. It may be

Always lift the handle and turn the key?		possible to reach through the letterbox or smash the glass and pull the handle down.
Do you have a door bar or chain and viewer?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Get one fitted and use it every time you answer the door.
If you have a porch or conservatory, do you lock the internal doors into the house?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Always lock both doors.
If you live in a block of flats, do you always shut the communal doors?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Make sure it is closed even if you didn't leave it open. Never prop them open and report damage immediately.
Windows		
Are the windows and frames in good condition?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Carry out repairs immediately ▪ Or replace with windows meeting PAS 24:2016 standard.
Do you secure your windows when you leave the room?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Secure your windows at all times, even if you are somewhere else in the house or garden. ▪ Never leave a window open for a cat.
Do your windows have locks?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Get locks fitted or replace the windows. Do not leave the key in the window.

Alarms and CCTV		
Do you have an alarm and/or CCTV?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use them if you have them. ▪ Contact www.nsi.org.uk or www.SSAIB.org for details of local suppliers. ▪ If you hear an alarm sounding, take action without putting yourself at risk.
Make your home look occupied		
Do you use lights and a radio on timers?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Put timers on lights and use them all the time, not just when you are out.
Do you leave your curtains open when you are out during daylight hours?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Closed curtains during the day can be sign that the house is empty.
Does anyone look after your house when you are away?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Give a key to a trusted neighbour/family member. Ask them to collect post, check the house, park on the drive and open/close curtains.
Property Identification		
Is your property marked?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use a permanent marker or UV pen to add your postcode and house number/name. ▪ Register your goods for free at www.immobilise.com ▪ Take photos and make an inventory.

Valuable Items		
Do you keep cash securely at a bank or building society?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Never keep cash at home.
Do you keep your valuable jewellery in a secure place?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid hiding sentimental or valuable pieces in obvious places like the master bedroom, under a bed or the bottom of a wardrobe. • If you must store valuables at home, get a safe certified to BSEN 1143-1-1997 bolted to a solid floor by a professional locksmith enquiries@locksmiths.co.uk
Do you hide your car keys?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never leave car keys in sight of the door.

Review your security at least once a year. Don't forget to help elderly or vulnerable family, friends or neighbours review theirs too.

How did you do?

Make a note of any actions required

Action	Date completed

First Principle: Related links

Ask the Police

Official Police Resource. The Ask the Police website provides you with information on a wide range of non-emergency policing matters.

askthe.police.uk

Secured by Design

Official UK Police initiative that combines the principles of 'designing out crime' with physical security.

securedbydesign.com

Sold Secure

Dedicated to reducing the risk of crime by assessment of security products.

<https://www.soldsecure.com/>

Crimestoppers

An independent charity that gives people the power to speak up to stop crime 100% anonymously, by phone 0800 555 111 or online.

<https://crimestoppers-uk.org/>

Victim Support

Covering the whole of Norfolk and Suffolk, a free, confidential support service specifically designed to help victims and witnesses of any crime.

Contact us on:

Phone: 0300 303 3706 (weekdays between 8am-5pm)

Email: nsvictimcare@victimsupport.org.uk

Web: www.nsvictimcare.org

Socials: @nsvictimcare

Call us on 101. Always dial 999 in an emergency

To see the full range of information go to:

suffolk.police.uk/firstprinciple or

norfolk.police.uk/firstprinciple

Or alternatively use your mobile phone to scan this QR code.

