



KEEPING YOUR HOME SAFE WHILE YOU'RE AWAY

Planning to go away over the holidays? Whether it's for a quick weekend getaway or an extended vacation, it pays to take some extra precautions to keep your house and belongings as safe as you can while you're not there.

Use the following checklist to make your property less enticing for would-be criminals:

_____ **Hold your mail or have a neighbour collect it**

A pile of mail on the front doorstep or envelopes pouring out of your mail slot is an instant tip-off that no one is home. Ensure parcels are delivered elsewhere.

_____ **Create the illusion that someone is home**

Suggestions include leaving a radio on, use timer lights, leave a car in the driveway, have someone mow your lawn, keep curtains open and don't tidy up too much.

_____ **Don't tell the world you'll be away**

As tempting as it is to share on social media about your upcoming trip perhaps consider only posting about it once you're back. Last thing you want to do is tip off the wrong person that you'll be away!

_____ **Notify a trusted neighbour, friend or family member**

Make sure at least one person you trust has your holiday contact details and a spare key so that they are able to check-in on the place while you're away or respond to an on-site emergency. Something as simple as a fire alarm beeping non-stop might need tending to while you're away.

_____ **Keep your keepsakes safe**

Use a fireproof safe to lock up any jewellery, sensitive documents, and valuable items and if possible hide the safe somewhere that a burglar is unlikely to look.

_____ **Alert your alarm company**

Call your home security company to let them know you'll be away. Make sure all of the door and window alarms are set and working when you leave. Don't have home security? Consider installing fake (but realistic) looking surveillance cameras or buying a security sticker purely as a deterrent method. A Neighbourhood Support sticker on windows or on your letterbox is also a great idea!

_____ **Hide the hide-a-key**

If you won't be needing to leave a spare key out for someone consider hiding it away in a secure spot inside your home or taking it with you.