

GOING ON HOLIDAY



NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

HOW TO REDUCE YOUR CHANCES OF BEING A VICTIM OF CRIME

BEFORE YOU GO

- The best burglary deterrent is to make the home look occupied.
- Do not close your curtains in the daytime. Ask a trusted friend or neighbour to close them for you when it does dark. Neighbours can help each other in many ways. For instance, making sure bins are in their normal place after refuse collection or even parking their car on your driveway.
- If a neighbour has a set of your keys, advise them not to put your surname, address or even your house number on them in case they fall into the wrong hands.
- Use automatic timer switches to turn your lights on when it goes dark – don't forget bedrooms.
- Cancel any milk or newspaper deliveries.
- Avoid discussing holiday plans in front of strangers.
- Cut the lawn before you go and trim back any plants or hedges that burglars could hide behind.
- If there is a chance that mail will pile up on your doorstep whilst you are away, consider the Post Office's 'Keepsafe' service. For a small fee, they can hold back the delivery of mail for up to two months.
- Consider leaving important documents and valuable items with other family members or a bank.
- If you normally leave valuable pedal cycles or similar items in your shed, consider putting them in the house.
- Make sure gardening equipment such as spades, ladders, etc are either locked away in a secure shed or in the house.
- Make sure that you have locked all outside doors and windows and, if you have a burglar alarm, make sure it is set.

YOUR JOURNEY

- Don't put your home address on your luggage, when you are travelling to your holiday destination.
- Most airlines will restrict you to one item of hand luggage. Keep valuables like cameras, jewellery, cash and passports in this bag so they are with you all the time.
- Never leave your luggage unattended at the airport, as the chances are the security staff, or worse still, a thief will remove it.
- Is it really necessary to take all that jewellery? It would be much safer in a secure place at home.

- Don't rely on the locks that are built into the suitcase, as most are simply just not very secure. An extra padlock will deter most thieves and putting a belt around the case will help prevent the suitcase bursting open.
- On arrival at your destination, collect your luggage as soon as possible. Check to see if it has been tampered with. If you think it may have been, report it at once!

AT YOUR DESTINATION

- When exchanging currency, try to have the exact amount of money ready. Do not produce a wallet bulging with cash.
- Do not keep your passport, sterling or foreign currency together and keep travellers cheques in a separate, safe, secure place.
- Many hotels have a safety deposit box for you to store your passport, large amounts of cash and credit cards. Always detach the key fob from the deposit box key and place the fob in the deposit box after memorising the box number. If you happen to lose the key you won't also lose all your money!
- Handbag and jewellery snatches are not uncommon in many tourist resorts; so don't put anything valuable in your bag, and only wear what jewellery is needed. Where your shoulder bag across your body, not just across your shoulder.
- Pick pocketing is widespread in many holiday cities, so again only carry what is necessary.
- There is also every conceivable 'con' going on in most busy holiday locations, from the photographer who promises to forward the picture, to the time-share sales person. Be aware and alert; when relaxed in 'holiday mode' it is easy to fall for these scams.
- If you feel burglary could be a problem in your hotel, then consider hiding valuables in your room. A 'can-safe' looks like a normal tin of food, hair spray or drink, but the bottom unscrews to let you store items away out of sight.
- You can improve door security by taking a temporary door lock. These locks can be put on your closed bedroom door to stop anyone getting in whilst you are asleep.

The time to prepare is now, not just before you go away!