

## HOME SECURITY TIPS FOR OEY RESIDENTS

“An alert and involved community is the criminal’s nemesis. It is often enough for him to try business elsewhere.” Nashville, TN Police Dept.

As simple as it sounds, **KEEP YOUR DOORS AND WINDOWS LOCKED.**

According to FBI statistics, the majority of thieves enter through open or unlocked doors and windows. And Googlebits.com relates that only one in four home break-ins involve forced entry.

Criminals love to operate in the dark or from concealed areas. **NIGHTTIME LIGHTING** is a tremendous deterrent. Motion detector lights can cover problem spots or entry points very effectively. Decorative lighting not only adds to our neighborhood’s esthetics, it can be a real deterrent to criminals. (LED’s are “green” and cheap to light.)

Criminals hate to enter homes where there are **DOGS**. They hate little yappers more than big breeds. Dogs are great alarm systems, but many can be bribed with treats and/or a calming voice. Smaller breeds are often more aggressive than larger ones.

**CONSIDER A HOME SECURITY SYSTEM.** There are now a range of companies that will install systems that monitor entry points, motion, sounds, etc. and can notify police or fire services of trouble. These often add resale value to your property.

**AVOID OVERGROWN LANDSCAPING,** especially near doors and windows. But thorny shrubs can form a very effective perimeter, and are useful below windows.

**DEADBOLT LOCKS** are valuable deterrents and double deadbolts (requiring a key inside and out) are best if your door has glass panes or panels. Cheap locks are no investment at all. Solid doors are best for exterior use. Sliding glass doors and windows can be jammed with bars or sticks cut and placed to impede their opening.

**KEEP GARAGE DOORS DOWN.** Make sure your door from the garage or basement to your main living area is also secured with a deadbolt lock.

**SECURE LADDERS AND HEAVY TOOLS KEPT OUTSIDE.** Don’t help a criminal get into your home (or your neighbor’s home!) by leaving tools accessible. (How would you feel if you returned to find a criminal had used your own ladder to gain entry via a second story window and used your own shovel to break the glass?)

**PREVENT BURGLARS FROM ‘SHOPPING.’** Drapes and shades are better than sheers. Close your blinds or shutters at night. Most robberies happen **VERY QUICKLY**, i.e., burglars are in and out in minutes. You are helping them if you let them “case the joint” at leisure before they strike.

When you are away, **MAKE YOUR HOME LOOK OCCUPIED.** Hook up lights to a timer, have Scott hold your mail, leave on a TV or a radio, cancel your paper, let a neighbor know you are gone and how to get in contact with you.

**ETCH A NAME OR ID CODE ON ALL YOUR ELECTRICAL VALUABLES.**

There is little more worthless to a crook than a piece of OPP (Other Peoples' Property) that he cannot sell fast or pawn because the goods are marked as belonging to someone else. Help frustrate a crook today by buying or borrowing an etcher for your stuff.

Speaking of stuff, **INVENTORY YOUR PROPERTY.** If it sounds like a daunting task, videotape your rooms' contents and keep a safe copy elsewhere.

According to Officer Ken Pence of the Nashville, TN police department, your home defenses should be set up "like an onion, not an egg." **DEFENSE IN LAYERS IS BEST.** Here's an example: no criminal with any sense is going to break in a well-lighted side window with prickly roses or shrubs at the base, that is also locked, "pinned" or levered closed, and has a bunch of plants or knick-knacks on the windowsill, and bulky furniture in front inside it that will trip him up or slow him down even more. A single layer of defense (like an eggshell) might cause someone to hesitate, but multiple layers of defense will likely cause that thief to pass you by.

**WINDOW PINNING** is a useful deterrent that is easy to do. It involves drilling a hole through the side rail of your sashes, then placing a nail of the same thickness in the hole: an instant lock, and a technique that can be used to secure a window in a slightly open position for ventilation. Dowel rods placed in the side track above a lower sash can also be effective.

**SHATTERGUARD** is a transparent interior window film that holds shards of a smashed window in place and deters entry. Imagine the look on THAT crook's face after taking a crowbar to a sash and having all the glass still between himself and his pelf? Whoops! [www.shatterguard.com](http://www.shatterguard.com) 1-888-306-7998 (This is not an endorsement.)

According to the Nashville, TN Police Department, "The most common means of breaking in is kicking in a door." Also, "Most burglaries occur during the DAY when you are away at work." A crazed or really determined thief is almost impossible to keep out of a home when you are away. But most thieves are not crazed or determined. They'll choose the path of least resistance. They know all the tricks, but they still need time, concealment, and fairly easy access. If you, as an OEY resident, deny him any or all of the above, it is most likely that criminal will look for an easier target.

**"IF OEY RESIDENTS BAND TOGETHER TO FIGHT CRIME,** we will force criminals to avoid our neighborhood entirely, preserve the quality of life we enjoy, and increase our property values." Tom Schaefer, chair, Community Action and Preservation Committee, OEYNA, 4 Nov 08.