

There's No Place Like Home: Security Tips for New Homeowners

Nothing compares to the feeling of being settled in a new home, so home security can be often overlooked in favor of more pressing issues for new homeowners. While major safety issues such as fire alarms and working locks are top of mind, other aspects of home security can fall by the wayside and go unattended for long periods of time.

Burglary and theft are two of the most common household property crimes and approximately 3 out of every 4 burglaries occur at a residential property. There are many precautions homeowners can take to limit the chance of a burglary or theft that should be addressed soon after moving into a new home.

- **Maintain your yard.** Well-groomed landscaping is an important aspect of home security. By keeping your shrubbery trimmed, criminals are unable to hide behind them.
- **Install outdoor lighting.** A well-lit exterior discourages criminals from hiding in your landscaping, and makes your home less approachable. Lights with motion sensors are also a good idea.
- **Update door and lock hardware.** It's always a good idea to replace your locks and make sure that all easily accessible entry points are secure when you move into a new home. This also includes evaluating window security and installing additional security measures if needed.
- **Meet your neighbors.** The more friendly eyes watching out for your property the better. By introducing yourself to your neighbors, you'll both be more comfortable alerting each other if something appears different.
- **Consider installing an alarm system.** Security systems are a major deterrent for criminals, but they don't need to be expensive to be effective. The average burglary results in a \$2,322 loss [FBI Crime in U.S., 2013], so an alarm system could easily be worth the cost and peace of mind it provides.
- **Check batteries in fire and carbon monoxide detectors.** In addition to taking preventative measures against burglary, another critical safety measure within your control is to protect your home from fire and carbon monoxide poisoning.

