

MENOMONIE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Menomonie Neighborhood Watch



Home Security Tips

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Door Systems

Reinforce the Frame

Replace one screw (or all screws) of each of the hinge plates with a 3-inch screw(s) that will reach past the door frame and into the studs behind the door frame. This will make the frame stronger and the door harder to pry open.

Security Strike Plate

The strike plate is where the deadbolt “throw” goes into and it should be 4 or more inches in length. The strike plate should be mounted to the frame with two or more screws that are at least 3 inches in length. To add some extra security, get a box strike plate that will enclose the deadbolt. Make sure that the box strike plate is at least 1 inch to fully enclose the 1 inch throw that the deadbolt should have. Make sure that the strike plates are at least 4 inches in length and use 3 inch screws.



Single Deadbolt

A single cylinder deadbolt is recommended on all exterior doors and the throw bolt should extend at least 1 inch from the edge of the door and have a hardened steel pin inside the bolt. The lock should have at least two ¼-inch case-hardened steel fasteners and it should also have a tapered or rotating guard around the key section so that it cannot be compressed with a pair of pliers. Look for products with ANSI Grade 1 ratings. These products with ANSI Grade 1 ratings are the most secure and provide the best protection for you and your family.

Glass Doors

If there is glass within 40 inches of your door lock, install a security grill to prevent someone from breaking the glass and reaching in to unlock the door. It is best to install this grill on the inside of the door. If you need to put the grill on the exterior side of the door, use tamper resistant fasteners like round-headed thru-bolts.



Peep Holes

When there is no visibility from the inside to see who is at the door, install a peep hole or a door viewer to see who is outside the door. These door viewers should give you a 190 degree view.

Pin Hinges

Pin hinges are recommended for exterior doors that open out. To prevent someone from removing the pins and opening the door from the hinge side, remove one of the screws of the hinge and drive a nail into the hole with ½-inch of the nail exposed. Next, cut off the nail head and remove the matching screw from the other half of the hinge and the nail should fit into the hole when the door is closed. Security door pin hinges are also available to buy if you want a simpler method.

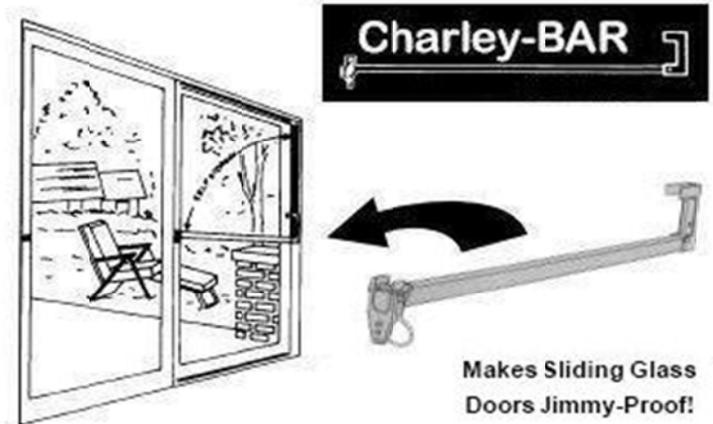


Replace the Door

If your door has a hollow core or is in a weakened condition, it should be replaced immediately. Hollow or weak doors are easy for people to break into. Exterior doors should be solid and made of fiberglass, solid wood or metal and avoid buying doors that are hollow.

Charlie Bar or Stick

If you have an exterior sliding door and are gone for long periods of time, use a Charlie bar that mounts to the frame and prevents the door from sliding. Sticks, dowels, or door security bars that fit into the bottom track also work well to stop the door from sliding.



Keys

- If you lose your keys or if they are stolen, change your locks immediately.
- Change the locks when you move into a new house.
- Do not store keys outside under mats, flowerpots, mailboxes or other “secret” hiding places.
- Put your house and car keys on separate key rings.
- Do not put identification tags on keys.

Windows

Pin Windows

When the window is closed, drill a small hole with a downward angle through the inside frame and into the outside frame (but not completely through the outside frame). Do the same on both sides of the window and place a sturdy nail or pin into the holes to prevent the window from moving. These pins should be sturdy but they should also be removable in case you need to escape through the window in an emergency.



Secure Window Air Conditioning Units

Secure your air conditioning unit by attaching a bar to the unit that extends past both sides of the window frame so that the unit cannot be removed from the outside. If a bar is not possible, use brackets to securely attach the air conditioning unit to the inside walls.

Adjust or Replace the Latch

If the latch is bent and not securing the window, either adjust it so the window locks securely or replace the entire latch. For additional security, drill a hole through the latch housing and latch while the latch is in the closed position. Insert a removable pin or nail to secure. (Make sure to use a removable pin or nail that will allow you to escape if necessary.)

Electric Door Openers

If you have garage doors that are opened by remote control, use a pin in the track to stop the door from moving when you are gone or add an auxiliary lock. (If you use an auxiliary lock or padlock make sure that it is composed of case-hardened steel.) Another option is to unplug your garage door opener if you are gone for long periods of time. If you use a keypad entry for your garage door, replace the key pad once it is worn because the combination you use can be visible and criminals can gain access to your home. Make sure that you secure your garage door's quick release to prevent break-ins. You can secure your garage door by using a zip-tie (see the picture on the right) or buying a garage door quick release cover (both these will allow you to use the quick release in an emergency).



Auxiliary Latch

These inexpensive latches clamp to the window and prevent the window from sliding beyond that point. Consider using the type that has a pointed screw. For even greater security, drill a small indentation that will allow the latch screw a place to grab on. Be sure not to tighten the screw too tight so you can escape if necessary. A charley bar can also be used to secure the window.

Block Off or Replace a Pet Door

Because any opening larger than 9 inches by 10 inches can be used to gain entrance into a home, block off pet doors by installing a frame that you can slide a security plate into if necessary.

Skylights

Use sheet screws to secure skylights to the roof. If the skylight is installed from the roof, use non-removable screws. Another option is to install bars or a grille inside the house just above ceiling level.

High Resistance Glass

Polycarbonate plastic, vinyl-bonded laminate glass 1/2-inch thick or more and acrylic plastic sheets 3/8-inch thick or more are break resistant glass and therefore provide the best protection against breaking and entering. Wired glass 1/4-inch thick, laminated glass approximately 1/8-inch thick and acrylic plastic approximately 1/8-inch thick are all medium resistant glass and are vandal resistant but not completely burglary proof. If you do not want to spend a large sum of money, you can use security film. This easy to install film is less expensive than replacing windows and it also saves energy and creates an extra barrier that will help to insulate your windows and save you money for heating/cooling your home.



Exterior

Gates

Be sure to lock a gate. Although locking the gate may not deter a criminal, it does make an intruder appear much more suspicious to your neighbors. This also makes it difficult for criminals to carry large objects over the fence.

Trim Shrubbery

To prevent someone from hiding behind shrubbery or trees, be sure that shrubbery is trimmed below the windowsill level or down to 3 feet. Also be sure to trim trees up 6 feet from the ground.

Security Plants

Prickly plants such as thorny cacti, pyracantha and acacia bushes or other thorny plants to provide natural security barriers when they are planted along property lines or below windows. These plants are also low maintenance and require little water.

House Numbers

Your house numbers should be present on the front, rear and roof of your house. They should also be at least 5 inches high and visible from the street. It also helps to have reflective numbers or if they are not reflective, light them up to make them more visible. The numbers on the roof should be non-reflective so they are visible to helicopter crews.



Lighting

You should have lights at the front, back and carport areas of your home. These lights should be left on all night or have a motion or infrared sensor so they come on automatically. Consider a timer that turns on your lights at dark because it does not give clues about whether or not you are home. These lights should be fully encased so that people cannot unscrew the light bulbs.

Secure Tools and Other Property

Tools and ladders that are left lying around your property may provide means for criminals to gain entry into your home so be sure to secure them. Store grills, barbeques, snow blowers and lawn mowers out of sight. Bicycles, skateboards, toys and tools left around your property draw in criminals and entice someone to commit a petty theft and may then decide to commit a burglary.



This home is a good example of what to do. Keep your home well lit and also trim shrubbery and trees. This will eliminate places for people to hide and survey your home.

Safety and Security Tips

Smoke and Fire Alarms and Emergency Preparedness

Make sure to have proper security like smoke, fire alarms and carbon monoxide detectors installed in your home so you can evacuate safely in an emergency. Install smoke alarms, inspect them regularly, plan escape routes and practice your escape route plans. Also make sure that grilles and bars on windows and doors have escape latches so you can escape if necessary. Make sure that any secondary locks on windows and doors have emergency releases so you can escape in an emergency.

Burglar Alarms



These are not necessary but are highly recommended to reduce the crime risk of your residence. In case of an emergency, use a bank or safe deposit box to store your valuables. Make sure your insurance policy covers your property. Popular insurance companies such as Allstate, Travelers, American Family, Esurance, Farmers, Progressive and State Farm all offer personal property coverage that protects your valuables and often offer to replace them or offer compensation for them if they are stolen. West Wisconsin Telcom and Per Mar offer security systems, installation and upkeep for the systems.

Inside the Home

- Store guns in a safe that is secured to the floor or in a large enough safe that requires a lot of help to move.
- Limit the amount of cash you keep inside your home.
- Find good hiding places for your belongings. The most common hiding places are under mattresses, in drawers, in desks and in file cabinets so try to avoid these spots because thieves know to look there first. Instead use unique hiding places like fake wall outlets or a candle that is real wax on the outside but hollow on the inside.



Operation Identification

Operation Identification is an important tool to use. Using an engraving pen, engrave your valuables with your driver's license number and state abbreviation to help locate your items if they are stolen. Also keep an updated inventory of your valuables and photograph them so you know what you have and what is missing. Popular insurance companies like Allstate, American Family and State Farm offer home inventory tools that help you keep track of your personal items (Allstate uses DigitalLocker.com and it is free, you do not need to be insured by Allstate to use it!). Jewelry, electronics, tools and clothing are the most frequently stolen items. Keeping an updated inventory will help to file a report if anything is stolen. If you engrave your belongings, it will make it easier for the police to identify your belongings and return them to you. See the property inventory below for an example of how you can document your belongings.



What to Avoid

- Chain link locks. These locks are weak and incredibly easy for criminals to break and gain access into your home.
- Posting on social media when you are going on vacation. You may not realize it but social media posts your location and criminals watch your activity and can know when you are not home. Social media sites like Foursquare are dangerous because it is publicly telling people where you are. Avoid posting on social media before you go on vacation. **Fact:** 4 out of 5 burglars use social media like Twitter, Facebook and Foursquare to select their targets.
- Leaving toys and tools around your property. Leaving toys and tools around your property may not seem like a big deal but leaving these things around not only invites in thieves, but it can also provide them with the tools to break into your home.
- Push button locks. These locks are easy for burglars to open so replace them with deadbolt locks. (See the deadbolt section above for more information.)
- Avoid leaving boxes of expensive items that you have recently purchased. These can be calling cards to criminals so try to destroy the boxes or keep them inside until garbage day.
- Putting your name on your mailbox. This makes it easier for thieves to find your phone number and call to see if you are at home or use social media to track you.
- Avoid using locks that can be opened with a “bump key.” Bump keys are inexpensive, can be purchased or easily made and work on roughly 90% of home door locks. Look for locks with ANSI Grade 1 ratings that are highly resistant to bump keys.
- Leaving notes on the door for service people or family members. This lets criminals know that you are not home and invites them to burglarize your home. Also avoid leaving notes by windows, on calendars and refrigerators where someone can see from a window. Burglars peer through windows and look at these notes that give them information about when the house will be empty.
- Leaving windows open and doors unlocked. More than 30% of apartment burglars gained access through an open door or window so always close and lock your windows and doors when you are gone, not matter how brief you will be gone.
- Leaving messages on your answering machines that indicate you are not home invites criminals in. Instead say that you are unable to take the call.
- Do not resist robbers. Do as you are asked and follow the instructions given but survey their appearance so you can report the crime.
- Never open the door for someone you do not know. Instead, use peepholes and intercoms to communicate with the person outside your door.
- Avoid using double cylinder deadbolts. These need a key on both the inside and the outside which make it dangerous if you need to leave in an emergency.



Property Identification List

Item	Make, Model, Size, Color	Serial Number	Purchase Date/Price
Battery Chargers			
Bicycles/Motorcycles			
Calculators			
Cell Phones			
Clocks			
Computers			
Fishing Equipment			
Golf Clubs			
Guns			
Kitchen Appliances			
Lawn Mowers			
Musical Instruments			
Power Tools			
Photography Equipment/Cameras			
Radios			
Small Hand Tools			
Stereo Speakers			
Sporting Goods			
Tape Recorders			
Television/Games			
Vacuum Cleaner			
VCR's			
Other			

Credit Cards, Debit Cards and ATM Cards

Remember: If your cards should become lost or stolen, call the credit card companies immediately.

Company/Phone Number	Account Number	Company/Phone Number	Account Number