



7 Strong Ways to Strengthen Your Home's Security



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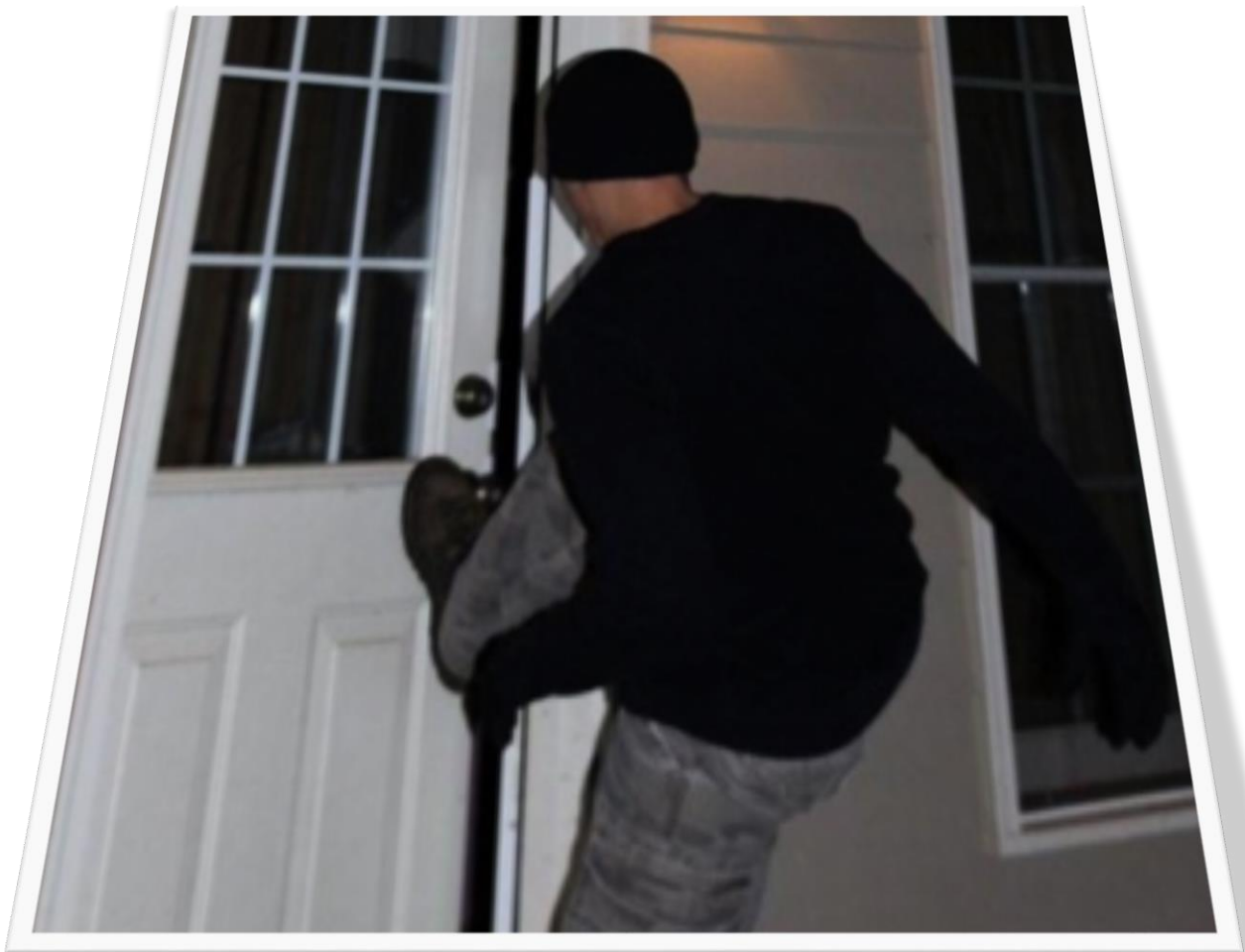


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1 Kick-Proof Your Doors... Even if You Have an Alarm System



Kick-Proof Your Doors...Even if You Have an Alarm System

Burglars are pretty brazen. Their number one entry point into your home is your front door, according to an article in the Washington Post. What they'll do is knock on your door in the middle of the day to see if anyone's home.

If no one answers, they'll kick the door open....even if you have a security alarm system.

Why?

Because:

1. The burglar may not know you have a home alarm system. In which case, you should make it clear that you do by putting security signs in your front yard.
2. Some burglars know that when they kick in the door they have a few precious seconds to look around your home and grab whatever they can before the alarm goes off. It's what you call a "smash and grab".

Don't get us wrong, installing a home security alarm will deter many criminals, **according to the Rutgers study (See chapter 7)**.

But for burglars who don't know you have a security system or just don't care that you do, you should kick-proof your doors to create another solid line of defense to protect your belongings and family.

How to kick-proof your doors

First, make sure the door itself isn't weak. Obviously a hollow door is going to be easy to kick in. So make sure yours is solid.

Solid door types include:

- Solid-wood
- Fiberglass
- Steel



For more on entry doors, check out [Consumer Reports' entry door buying guide](#).

However, the door itself is only as good as lock keeping it shut.

According to battering ram tests done by [Consumer Reports](#), all of the above door types eventually opened up because the “doorjamb split near the lock’s strike plate.” Their advice to kick-proof your door is to:

- Strengthen it with a **deadbolt lock** and a **reinforced heavy-duty metal box strike** that’s installed with **3-inch screws** (longer screws will keep the metal box strike firmly in place when force is applied from kicking)
- Secure the door’s hinges with **3-inch screws**.

In the next chapter we’ll go into more detail about how to pick a quality lock for your home.

2 Select the Right Door Lock



Select the Right Door Lock

Your front door is the first line of defense against burglary. But is the current lock on your door enough? Here we discuss the types of door locks available, their proper applications and how they can [enhance your home's security](#).

Privacy locks

These locks are built for **interior applications** and consist of a button on one side that pushes in to lock the door. On the other side is a small slot that can be used to unlock the door. Do not install or use these locks on the exterior of your home, including the door between the garage and your house.

Pros: Easy to install, convenient, very cheap

Cons: Very easy to “pick” or force open

Exterior Locksets

Most London area homes have at least an exterior lockset on their doors. A standard exterior lockset consists of a doorknob with a keyhole on the outside and either a keyhole or a button that can be turned or pressed to lock the door from the inside. These door knobs offer slightly more security than privacy locks due to more solid construction and the need to use a key to unlock.

Pros: Moderately priced, best when paired with deadbolt

Cons: Many models can be picked with just a credit card, door can be easily forced open

Deadbolts

All exterior doors in your home should have a deadbolt. A deadbolt lock is usually installed above an exterior lockset. You can also buy combination exterior lockset/deadbolt locks.

Deadbolts offer more security by combining a long bolt that inserts deeper into your doorframe than standard exterior locks. Deadbolts can have a keyhole on both sides or a keyhole on the exterior and a turning knob on the inside.

Pros: Convenient, adds significant security at low investment, cost as little as 25 euro.

Cons: Higher-end models can cost over 100 euro and 200 euro.

Keyless locks

Keyless or electronic locks are types of deadbolts and/or exterior locksets that can be operated without the use of a key. Popular models include keypad, remote control and fingerprint-scanning locks. These models usually include a key override, as well.

Pros: Can be extremely convenient (no keys), can integrate with your home security system

Cons: Cost – many are much more expensive than similar standard deadbolts.

Auxiliary locks

You can improve the security of your Cyprus area home with an auxiliary lock. These locks are typically installed on the inside part of your door and doorframe and used in

conjunction with one or more of the listed previous locks. A popular example of an auxiliary lock is a chain door lock. One end of the chain is attached to the interior side of your door and locks by sliding the opposite end of the chain into a metal bracket mounted on the wall next to the door.

Pros: Easy to install, relatively inexpensive, works with most types of doors

Cons: Many models are easily compromised, best used as a secondary lock

A word about quality

The best lock is only as good as the door it is mounted in and the hardware used.

When selecting a lock, **avoid Grade 3 locks**. Grade 2 is good for most homes and Grade 1 is commercial quality (and much more expensive).



3 Strengthen Your Largest Security Weak Spot: Your Windows



How to Select the Right Door Lock

One of the weakest points in every home's security is the windows. Whether it's the glass on the front door or the basement windows, ordinary glass can be easily broken and the window used as an entry point for thieves.

There are a number of products you can purchase and install in your home or business to improve the security of your windows and deter and prevent burglars from gaining access to your home or business

Types of window security products

Security bars

One of the most effective ways to keep thieves from using your windows as an entry point into your home or business is by installing metal security bars or grilles over the windows.

However, they can be unsightly. They may also prohibit use as emergency or fire exits.

Look for security bars with quick releases that can be used in case of a fire or other emergency where the building must be evacuated.

Window locks

Window locks are a must, especially on the ground floor of your home or business. There are a variety of different window locks available to fit the type of windows you have. Purchase them at a local hardware store.



Glass replacement/reinforcement

Ordinary glass is extremely fragile by nature. To increase your window security, many manufacturers produce products that either enhance the glass or provide a replacement for glass.

The four main categories are listed below.

- **Wire glass** – As the name implies, wire glass is glass with small wires embedded in it. The glass breaks but the wires hold pieces and impede entry.
- **Tempered glass** – Tempered glass is several times stronger than ordinary glass but still breakable with excessive force.
- **Plastic glazing** – You can replace your glass window with a plastic window such as Plexiglass or Lexan. These plastics are stronger than ordinary glass but are also easily scratched and defaced and can turn yellowish from exposure to the sunlight.
- **Laminated glass** – Like the glass used in car windows, consists of two layers of glass bonded to plastic. The glass still shatters but usually adheres to the plastic rather than falling out of the frame. It is heavy, costly and much thicker than other alternatives. Window films can also be purchased and applied to your current windows that mimic this effect.

Glass-break sensors

Glass sensors are security system add-ons that work by triggering your alarm when a window breaks. There are two main types of glass sensors. Acoustic sensors listen for the sound of breaking glass while shock detectors are mounted on the window and sense the actual window breakage. Both sensors then trip your security system, which is often enough to send the burglar running.

You can get the best of both worlds with a **dual-tech glass-break sensor** that combines acoustic with shock sensor technology. That means it will trip your security alarm only if shock is applied to the window **and** glass breaks at the same time. This reduces security false alarms in your home.

Security screens

Security screens offer original screen in your window is replaced with new material that is the same weight as the previous screen. The difference is, the security screen has a special wire every 4 inches and a switch at the top and bottom. If the screen is cut or removed from the opening, your alarm will sound. The beauty of the security screen is that it protects you even if the window is open.

It's been said that a chain is only as strong as it's weakest link. In the same way, a security system is only as secure as its weakest point. Don't neglect the weakest point of your home; increase your window security today.

4 Secure Your Garage with These 7 Tip



Secure Your Garage with These 7 Tips

Now that you know how to secure your doors and windows, it's time to secure the biggest entry way into your home—the garage door.

If you've never thought twice about securing your garage door and the valuables stored behind it, it's time to start.

Tips for keeping your garage secure

Don't keep your remote opener in your car. Instead of leaving your remote door opener on the visor of your car where it can easily be stolen, consider switching to the type that attaches to your key ring. This way you'll know your opener is with you at all times.

Maintain your garage door

Periodically check your garage door for loose springs and joints, rust, and cracks or weaknesses in the door.

Repairing these problems eliminates them from being a security threat.

Close the door

Don't leave your garage door open for extended periods of time. Doing so is simply advertising the goods you keep inside. It also makes it easy for a would-be burglar to tell when you're home or away.

Install a solid door

If your garage door has windows, consider switching to a solid door. If that isn't an option, try frosting the glass or covering the windows so nobody can look inside.

Secure your garage

If you already have a home security system, contact your security company and request your garage door be connected, too.

Unplug the garage door opener

When you leave for vacation or other extended periods of time, unplug the garage door opener and lock the door from the inside so it cannot be opened while you are away.

Protect against fires

Many house fires begin in the garage. Installing a **fire detector** that is part of your alarm system can help alert both you and the authorities in the event of a fire.



5 Use Home Security Lights Correctly...So They Don't Work Against You



Use Home Security Lights Correctly...So They Don't Work Against You

If you're like most homeowners, you probably think that the more light on your home, the safer it will be. After all, it seems logical that burglars would be more likely to commit their crime in the dark where they're more likely to go unnoticed.

But that may not actually be the case. According to a report by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), some security lighting is ineffective at best and can increase crime at worst!

Their research, done in conjunction with recommendations from Illuminating Engineering Society of North America (IESNA), shows these 2 ways security lights can cause security problems.

Lights that are too bright

You've likely seen homes that have large flood lights (or perhaps you have some) in the name of home security. However, as the DOE report states, "Numerous case studies and related research further show that simply increasing light levels or maintaining high lighting levels does not necessarily promote or maintain enhanced safety or security."

This seems counterintuitive. After all, wouldn't more light mean fewer places for burglars to hide and a better chance they'll be seen?

Not quite.

Large, bright lights create a few problems, including:

- **They create glare.** Have you ever tried looking in the direction of a large floodlight aimed at you? The glare created can make it difficult for passers by and would-be witnesses to identify potential crime.
- **They worsen night vision.** If the area around you is lit brightly, it makes it more difficult to see into dark areas because your eyes adjust to the light. This means bright light can actually create darker hiding places for criminals.
- **They create problems with security cameras.** Similar to how they affect your eyes, overly bright security lights can also negatively impact the ability of video cameras to see what's going on, making it more difficult to identify the suspect in a burglary. (See the image above for a demonstration.)

The fix: If you have a security floodlight at your home, it should be pointed downward. Consider also using a top visor on flood lights. These changes will reduce the amount of glare created by floodlights.

Improperly placed security lights

Another big reason many home security light systems can fail or lead to an increase in crime is because they are not placed well. As the DOE says in their report, “It is primarily factors associated with the placement and quality characteristics of exterior lighting that tends to enhance security.”

Similar to the problems of lights that are too bright, improperly placed security lights can make it difficult for witnesses to identify faces and actions and may interfere with the correct function of video cameras in the area.

The fix: The IESNA recommends the following home security lighting tips:

- **Place two lights on either side of the main entry.** Not only will this help homeowners locate keys and locks easier when coming and going, but it will also help you identify people through your peephole.
- **Don't use overhead lights at entrances and exits.** Overhead lights will create a silhouette or cover the visitor's face with shadows. The ideal situation is to have lower wattage lights on each side of the door at about eye level.
- **For energy efficiency, use a motion-sensored and photocell combination device.** This will ensure the lights only turn on at night when someone approaches your doorway. The motion sensor can also serve to alert you that someone is at your door.



Fix your lights, increase your security

We're not saying you should turn off all your home security lights. As the IESNA says in their Guideline for Security Lighting,

“While there are no guarantees that improved lighting will cause a decrease in crime, there are circumstances in which lighting can be an effective crime countermeasure, either alone or in combination with other measures.”



6 Landscape Your Yard to Improve Your Home's Security



Landscape Your Yard to Improve Your Home's Security

When you are out trimming your trees, pulling weeds or mowing your lawn, the last thing that on your mind are burglaries and break-ins. But did you know that good landscaping can improve your home's security?

It's true. The choices you make in your home landscaping can make a large impact on the security of your home. Use these landscaping tips to improve your [home's security](#) today.

Trim trees

If you have trees with branches within seven feet of your home, take a moment and trim them. This is especially important if the branches are near upper floor windows or decks. Thieves can use these trees as ladders to gain entrance to your home.



Maintain your yard

Mow your lawn, pull weeds, pick up leaves and keep your plants healthy. An messy yard can tell thieves and burglars that you are on vacation or away from home (even if you are not). When you are gone, have someone you know upkeep the yard for you.

Keep bushes small

We recommend keeping your bushes trimmed to no higher than three feet, especially the bushes nearest to your home. A large, thick shrub or bush can be a great place for thieves to hide from neighbors and passersby while they try to break into your home.



Avoid planting a hedge

Many Atlanta homeowners plant a hedge of trees, bushes or shrubs around their yard to block road noise or to increase privacy. However, this can actually be a security risk as a hedge can allow thieves to get close to your home without being detected.

Plant thorny bushes

Low-growing shrubs and bushes with thorny branches can be a great deterrent for would be burglars. Plant hawthorne, rose bushes or bougainvillea, and keep the plants small and low to the ground to avoid allowing them to also become a hiding place (tip 3).

So the next time you spend a Saturday maintaining your yard or planting new bushes, remember that you are not only beautifying your home but also improving your home's security.

7 Install a Security Alarm System



Install a security alarm system

It's no surprise that a security company would suggest installing a security system to prevent burglaries. But we don't make that suggestion without some proof that it works.

The Rutgers University School of Criminal Justice conducted a study to show the effectiveness of home security systems. Here's a summary of their findings.

Increase in registered home alarm systems equals a steady decrease in burglaries

Using data provided by New Jersey's Newark Police Department, researchers found there was, "a steady decrease in burglaries in Newark between 2001 and 2005," which, "coincided with an increase in the number of registered home burglar alarms," according to study author Dr. Seungmug Lee.

In other words, an installed burglar alarm makes your home less attractive to intruders and protects your home without displacing burglaries to nearby homes.

But how do they know if the decrease in crime was because of the alarm systems instead of other factors?

After all, correlation does not automatically imply causation.

According to Dr Lee they used “sophisticated in-depth research techniques,” to, “eliminate the variables that impact crime rates and focus directly on the impact alarm systems have on residential burglaries.”

Good for the whole neighborhood

The study also noted that alarm systems can make your community a safer place if more people install them.

“Neighborhoods in which burglar alarms were densely installed have fewer incidents of residential burglaries than the neighborhoods with fewer burglar alarms,” the study said.

Technology innovations make alarms systems more dependable

One of the biggest reasons for a security system consistently deters crime is because of “technology innovations” that made sophisticated commercial and industrial security options available to middle-class homeowners.

This transformed home alarm systems into a dependable security option.

“Computers, printed circuits, digital communicators, and microprocessors have refined monitoring and signaling technology, and modern electronic sensors now include ultrasonic, infrared and microwave devices which were formerly available only in more sophisticated commercial and industrial applications,” said Dr. Lee.

Security alarm systems from a burglar's point of view

To support their conclusion that alarm systems actually deter burglars from breaking into your home, they cited the study “Burglars on the Job 1994” which concluded, “Most offenders, though, wanted to avoid alarms altogether and, upon encountering such devices, abandoned all thought of attacking the dwelling.”

Security alarm systems: A rock-solid investment

As you can see from the Rutgers study, a security system is worth the investment.

But it needs to be custom-built for your home to work effectively.

If you want to learn more about how a security system can help protect your family, talk to one of our security experts in Limassol area.



Talk to a Security Expert



Every home is different and has different security risks and weak spots. At Evzone Security & Protection, we send a trained professional to your home to assess your needs. Before we sell you anything, we want to make sure it meets your home's needs and your family's budget.

If you want a free, in-home security consultation, give us a call at 77776020 or [contact us online](#).

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