

Ensure your home is secure whilst on holiday

Going on holiday is an exciting time and something that we all look forward to.

However, before going away on holiday you need to think about the security of your home, as returning home from a holiday to find out that your home has been burgled would be both upsetting and stressful.



Ensure your home is secure whilst on holiday

Alfie Hosker, Technical Manager at Secured by Design, the official police security initiative, said:

"Most burglars are opportunists, with their motive in the main being to get into a property as quickly as possible, steal something of value and then leave as quickly as possible. A secure home will therefore be a deterrent to them and reduces the chance of you becoming a victim of a burglary".

Follow the advice below from Secured by Design to help keep your home safe while you're away

- Ensure doors and windows are in a good state of repair and that good quality locks or bolts are fitted to all outside doors
- Ensure the locks on all windows and doors are in good working order and are locked. If you are replacing a broken or defective lock, or looking to improve the security of existing doorsets or windows, a [Locksmith](#) registered with the Master Locksmiths Association can specify the best & most secure lock to use for your type of door or window.
- Remove the keys from all windows and doors and put them in a safe place when you leave the house

- If you have an intruder alarm, make sure it's set. If you don't have one consider having an approved alarm system installed. Visit [HERE](#) to find out all the information that you need to know to assist you in choosing the right security system for your home or business
- Make use of timer plugs with lamps and radios to make your house seem occupied. You can also get photosensitive bulbs, which are activated when it gets darker
- Don't leave valuable items such as laptops and jewellery in view of windows. Lock valuable items away in a ground anchored safe or you could consider leaving important documents and valuable items with other family members whilst away

Don't forget the outside of your home too. It is important that your home does not appear unoccupied whilst you are away, so consider cutting the lawn and hedges before you leave, so that it doesn't look unkempt.

- Make sure all access points are secured such as gates and activate any external security lighting that you may have
- Ensure gardening equipment, tools and ladders are put away and securely stored. Don't leave them lying around in your garden as they could aid burglars
- Ensure that any sheds and outbuildings are locked and secured. Use good quality locks on [garages](#) and sheds (ensure screws on latches and hinges cannot be undone easily from the outside) and where possible ensure that they are alarmed
- Mark your valuables such as jewellery and electronic equipment, including your gardening equipment, tools and other valuables stored in sheds and garages, using a Secured by Design approved [property marking solution](#)
- Cancel milk and newspaper deliveries if you have them. Don't announce your departure to a shop full of people. Only tell people who need to know you're going away such as a trusted friend or neighbour
- Ask a trusted neighbour or friend to collect post, open and close curtains
- Never post statuses or comment on social media about going on holiday – or indeed whilst you are away on holiday. You wouldn't display a sign in your window advertising that you're going on holiday, so don't advertise it online - if you must post status updates, ensure that your privacy settings are set so that only trusted family and friends can view the updates
- Is there a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme where you live? Visit www.ourwatch.org.uk and enter your postcode to check to see if there are any schemes declared in your area, or alternatively speak with your local Neighbourhood Policing Team
- Make sure that you have up-to-date contents and buildings insurance – and remember, most insurance policies only cover burglary claims on an unoccupied home if there are signs of forced entry, so double-check all doors and windows are closed and locked

Finally, just before you actually set off it's worth allowing a quiet couple of minutes on the doorstep to check you've done all you had to do and taken everything you need with you.