

HOME SECURITY

An Effective Approach To Home Protection

Target Hardening and Environmental Design

Being Safe At Home. . . Protecting Your Property

Being safe at home is everyone in your household's responsibility. Make sure everyone is aware of the security procedures you have in place and are committed to following them.

If you wish to keep your house from being broken into, you must make yourself a "hard target." "Target Hardening" focuses on the concept that criminals often seek an easy target to prey on. If you make yourself a hard target, the criminal will simply move to a more vulnerable victim. Criminals like easy targets which minimizes the likelihood of being detected and/or caught. The more of an obstacle you present, the more likely a potential burglar will pick another house to break in to.

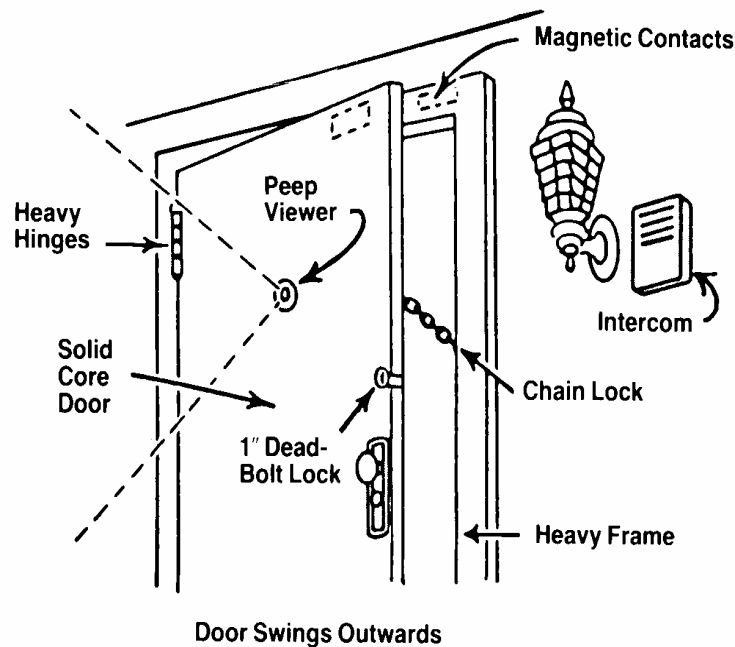
Doors and Windows

One of the simplest things you can do is lock your doors. Did you know a good portion of home burglaries occur because there was a door or window left open? Burglars commonly use unlocked rear doors, open bathroom windows and unsecured garage service doors to enter your house. By keeping the doors and windows to your residence locked, you dramatically reduce the likelihood of

becoming a victim. Lock your doors even if you leave the house for only a moment. A brief trip would give a skilled burglar enough time to make his way through your house.

Install a good deadbolt. A deadbolt lock adds enough strength to the door to keep the door from being “kicked in” by some attackers. Most importantly however it keeps a potential burglar from “jimmying” your spring latch lock. A deadbolt should be a minimum of 1.5 inches. It is, however, recommended to have at least a 3 inch deadbolt.

If your door has decorative glass near-by, it is recommended to have a double cylinder lock. These locks require a key be used from the inside in order to open the door. These locks prevent someone from being able to break near-by glass and manipulate the lock.



Above is a diagram you could use in order to examine the door and locking system you are currently using. Are all the above components found on your doors?

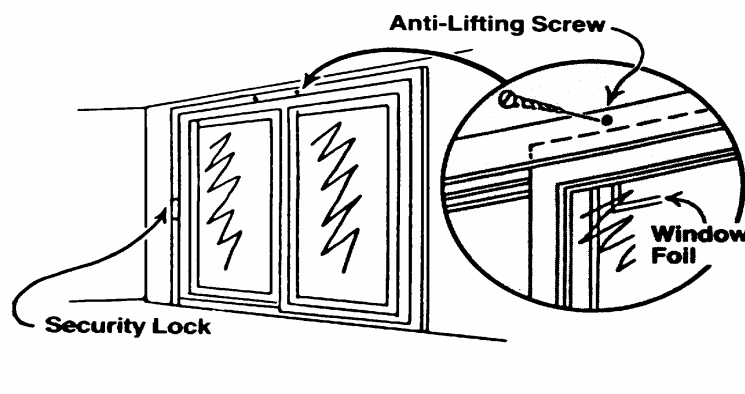
Regardless of all the precautions you take and the locks you use, the door frame must be in good condition. The door frame surrounds the door and secures it to the frame of the house. A solid door frame will keep anyone from prying the door away, making the locking mechanism ineffective. When at all possible use steel doors and a steel door frame. Make sure all the components are constructed from quality materials and are installed properly.

Windows

All of the above information as it pertains to doors holds true for windows. A secure frame and quality construction materials are all important, but what about deadbolts? There is a locking device you could add in order to assist the manufactured locks already installed on your windows.

You can install a "security pin." Simply drill a hole through the frame of the window and place a nail, wooden peg or screw through the holes. Do not permanently attach the pin. Leave open the possibility that you may have to exit in an emergency through a window. Allow yourself the ability to remove the pin. If you drill the hole at a downward angle, it will keep the pin in place, yet you will also be able to remove it, if necessary.

Sliding Glass Doors



Above is an example of how to secure sliding glass doors. The same "Safety Pin" system could be used as it was mentioned before. Don't forget an easy way to defeat these locking devices is by lifting on the door. As you add a device to keep the door from being forced open, also include a pin on top in order to keep the door from being lifted off its track.

Note: The time to install these items is before a burglary takes place, not after. Don't wait until you become a victim. Take the effort to examine your house and determine what efforts you could make in order to prevent a crime from occurring.

Key Security

Locks do little to prevent home burglaries if someone has a key to your house. Remember the following:



- **Leave your keys under a rock or doormat**
- **Put your address or personal information on your keys**
- **Be afraid to change your locks in the event you lose your keys.**

When you go on vacation:

- Stop all deliveries including U.S Mail, the newspaper and advertisements.
- **Canfield residents can call (330)533-4903 and be placed on a vacation house check list.**
- Move valuables away from windows.
- Secure rare or expensive jewelry in a safety deposit box.
- Obtain security and motion sensitive outdoor lighting.
- Place interior lights on a timing device. You could also place a similar device on a television or radio.
- In case of an emergency, leave with a trusted neighbor where you could be contacted.



Environmental Design

Crime prevention is more than simply making it inconvenient for a burglar to commit crime. Though target hardening is an effective approach, Environmental Design can assist in our overall goal of preventing crime.

Tips on deterring Crime:

1. A little lighting goes a long way. Make sure your street lights are in good working order. Place lights in your driveway and at your property boundaries. Make sure you have spot lights and motion sensitive lights on or near your house.
2. Trim back all shrubs and bushes. Keep your windows clear of tress and shrubbery. Don't allow criminal to work undetected behind the cover of a large tree. If someone is going to crawl through a window you want them to be seen by a passerby or neighbor. Keep your grass cut and display a defined boundary between you and your neighbor's property line.
3. Keep your yard tidy. Pick up trash cans as soon as possible. Don't leave ladders or tools lying around. **Make sure your house number is clearly visible.**
4. Keep a radio on in your garage and keep the garage door down. If a burglar knocks on your front door to see if anyone is home, they will hear the radio. Even when someone doesn't come to the door, they will assume you're busy, but home. They will pick another house.

Alarm Systems

Security or Alarm Systems do have a place in preventing crime and if used effectively can assist in securing one's personal belongings. An alarm system, however, is not a cure for all people. Be careful in choosing which alarm system or company you purchase or do business with.

Though The Canfield Police Department does not recommend one particular alarm company over, we can offer some tips in selecting such a service.



When shopping for an alarm:

- Determine if you are in need of a security system
- Keep any system as simple as possible
- Pick a system that fits your needs and you feel comfortable operating
- Get estimates from at least three different companies

- Get references from companies you may do business with
- Check to make sure you have back up systems in place
- Check with your homeowners insurance company for guidance
- Determine if the alarm company carries insurance
- Make sure any installed equipment is UL approved
- Obtain in writing the terms of your agreement with the alarm company
- Make sure there is 24 hour monitoring of your system
- Include both a local audible and direct monitoring feature