

# CRIME PREVENTION

## Personal Safety

### Plan ahead

- Before you go out, consider how you are going to get home, e.g. Can you travel home with a friend? What time does the last bus/train leave?
- Prepare for your day before you leave – consider what you might need.
- Update someone on your plans.
- Consider carrying a personal alarm.
- Plan your journey – google street view is particularly useful for identifying landmarks in an unknown area.

### When travelling on foot

- Try to use well-lit, busy streets and use the route you know best.
- Plan your route and look confident as you travel.
- If you do have to pass higher risk areas, consider what how you'd respond if you felt threatened.
- Consider heading for a public place; somewhere you know there will be other people, for example a garage or shop.
- Whenever possible, walk facing oncoming traffic to avoid curb crawlers.
- If you think you are being followed, trust your instincts and take action. As confidently as you can, cross the road, turning to see who is behind you. If you are still being followed, keep moving. Head to a busy area and tell people what is happening. If necessary, call the police.

### Remain aware

- Keep your mind on your surroundings – avoid distractions such as your mobile phone or headphones.
- Be aware when using cash point machines. If there are signs of tampering or people acting suspiciously, do not use it.
- Try not to keep all your valuables in one place. It's a good idea to keep valuables such as wallets in an inside pocket.

- Consider carrying a personal safety alarm, which can be used to shock and disorientate an attacker giving you vital seconds to get away.

## Personal Safety at Home:

Here are a few tips which may help keep you safe:

- Always answer the door with the door chain on. Even if you are expecting a visitor, always keep the chain on until you are sure that the person at the door is the person you are expecting. However, don't leave the chain on overnight.
- If the person at your door is not family or a friend, always ask for ID. Even if you have an appointment with someone, make sure the person at the door is who they say they are.
- You are entitled to ask them to pass their ID through the door gap, leaving the chain in place. Please do this, if they refuse, don't let them in.
- Check the ID. Is there a photograph? Does it look like them?
- Is it a company you have heard of? If it is you can always telephone the main company telephone number to see if they have representatives working in the area. You will be able to find the phone numbers for your gas, electricity and water suppliers on your bill. Keep a note of the numbers near your phone.
- If there is a phone number on their ID, that starts with 07, this means that it is a mobile phone. It is not advisable to trust calling a mobile phone to confirm a company. Always get a land line number from the operator /phone book or look them up on a computer if you have one.
- It doesn't feel nice to shut a door in someone's face, BUT, that is exactly what you should do, if you are not sure who is at your door, it doesn't feel right, or you are unsure, please **DON'T OPEN THE DOOR.**

## Keeping your Car Safe

- It might sound obvious, but make sure you lock the doors and shut the windows and sunroof whenever you leave your vehicle unattended.
- Always take the keys out of the ignition even if you're just stopping to buy a newspaper, paying for fuel, or popping back into your home to get something.

- Be aware of your keys. Don't leave them lying around, visible or in pockets in changing rooms where they could be taken. Don't leave them visible on a windowsill in your home or near to the front door, where they could be "hooked" through the letterbox.
- Never leave any valuables in your vehicle - not even in the glovebox or boot - and keep ALL other possessions out of sight. Even if you know that there is nothing valuable in your coat pocket or bag left on the back seat, a thief may try their luck
- Remove your sat nav and its holder and wipe away any suction marks as these could suggest to a potential thief that a sat nav is stored in your vehicle.
- Never leave vehicle documents in your car - don't make it easy for a thief to sell your car or provide a cover story if stopped by the police.
- Use an approved steering lock or gear clamp and remember to set your immobiliser and alarm if you have them.
- Consider buying locking screws kits to secure number plates which are targeted by criminals.
- Register your stereo, laptop, sat nav and any other property on the free online property database [www.immobilise.com](http://www.immobilise.com). It only takes a few minutes and could help police trace your property if it's lost or stolen.
- If you advertise your vehicle for sale on an online web site, ensure that its number plates are covered over when photographed to avoid cloning of its identity.

## Keyless Vehicles

- Keep car keys in a signal blocking pouch which stops the signal from your key when you are not using it. You can purchase Police approved 'Secured By Design' signal blocking pouches here: [http://www.securedbydesign.com/?post\\_type=product&s=signal+blocker](http://www.securedbydesign.com/?post_type=product&s=signal+blocker)
- Keep keys away from the front of your property. Keeping them upstairs and/or hidden away is preferable.

## Home Security

- A monitored burglar alarm Monitored activation leading to a contact to you and your nominated key holders straight away.

- A doorbell camera Uses WI-FI technology to see, hear, record and speak to anyone at your front door via your smartphone, tablet or PC from anywhere. Can include motion sensors to alert you to activity at your home.
- An internal camera Uses WI-FI technology. Activation via a motion sensor alerts you to activity at your home. Facility to see, hear and speak to anyone in your home via your smartphone, tablet or PC from anywhere.
- Exterior lighting Install “dusk to dawn” lighting outside your home.
- Timer switches Works with lighting/radio etc. to give your unoccupied home a lived-in look. Simulated TV Emits flashing ambient lighting to give your unoccupied home a lived-in look.

## If you have been burgled

- Whilst the privacy of a high hedge, fence or wall might be appealing, please remember, that it will also offer privacy to the burglar, trying to force entry to your property. Try to keep hedges, fences and walls to waist height. Don't give them the opportunity to hide from view.
- You might like to think about motion sensor security lighting at both the front and back of the property too. These lights will react when approached. But remember animals can set them off too.
- Perimeters: You can fix 'Prikka Strip' to your fence as long as it is a minimum of 6ft high, and has a warning sign up on the outside of the fence, or you can fit a trellis to the top of your fence (you can do this on lower fences too). Don't go to the expense of buying an expensive strong one, ideally you don't want it to hold someone's weight. It is there to make climbing over a fence more difficult. Also plant prickly type bushes at the perimeters. All off these methods will make your property less attractive to opportunist burglars.
- Many burglars will use what they can find in your garden to force entry. Remember, put your garden tools away, locked in a secure shed, preferably put net curtains up at any windows so burglars can't see what is in there.

- A padlocked hasp and staple or bolt (as shown are good measures) but remember the wood needs to be in good condition. Lock smaller tools in a toolbox. If you have lots of expensive large items in your shed (lawn mowers, strimmer's, and large heavy toolboxes) use a long chain and padlock to lock them all together. It might be that someone walking down the road pushing a lawn mower is a good neighbour, going to cut someone's grass, and won't be challenged, but if they have a strimmer and a hedge trimmer linked via a chain to the lawn mower, there is a good chance they are not the good neighbour!
- If you have a wooden front door, you should have two locks, a Yale and a mortice. If you have a UPVC front door, your door should have a 5-leaver locking system. You will need to lift the handle to engage these locks. Sometimes you will need to turn the key to make sure the door is locked. In both cases, a door chain is advisable, this should be engaged if you are answering the door. Even if you think you know who it is, you should check (using a spy hole or window) if you don't know them use a chain, or DON'T answer the door.
- Letter box guards can be fitted to the inside of the door to stop people putting their hands through and opening the door. Never leave keys in the lock, especially back doors with cat flaps.
- Sash Jammers can be fitted to windows or doors to add to the security. All windows in your house should be locked, especially if they are above a flat roof, however, in modern UPVC windows there will usually be one window which may have a green sticker on, and this will be your fire escape window. This window should NOT be locked. You can also find things called window restrictors. These will 'lock' you window in an open position and can prevent it from being pulled further open. You can purchase these items online and, in most cases, fit them yourselves.
- If you must leave your ladders outside, and you can't chain them up in a shed or garage, make sure they are locked closed either to a drainpipe or by using a bracket, secured to a wall and padlocked.

## Neighbourhood Watch

<https://www.herts.police.uk/Information-and-services/Get-involved/Neighbourhood-Watch/Neighbourhood-Watch>

Here you will find details of the Neighbourhood Watch scheme and how to join. They will keep you UpToDate on what is happening in your area and provide crime prevention information.

<http://www.hertswatch.com/>

Online Watch Link (OWL) Neighbourhood Watch website

**STAY SAFE**