



A Safe Home

A safe home does not necessarily require the use of expensive alarms, security systems, and window and door bars. Instead, awareness of crime in your neighborhood, proper use of door and window locks, lighting, and landscaping greatly increase your chances of maintaining a safe home and avoid becoming a victim.

Exterior Doors

The Pima County Sheriff's Department recommends that all exterior doors should be either solid wood or metal. To add to the security, use strong door hinges on the inside of the door, with non-removable hidden pins. Additionally, all doors should be well lit and have wide angle door viewers to verify who is on the other side of the door prior to opening it.

Locks

Your lock is only as good as your door is strong, so after ensuring that you have secured your home with good doors, make sure you can lock them with strong, reliable locks. Remember to always keep your doors and windows locked, whether you are at home or away, even for a short period of time.

Use quality keyed knobs as well as deadbolts. Deadbolts can withstand twisting, turning, prying, and pounding that regular knobs cannot.

When choosing a deadbolt, the Sheriff's Department recommends a lock that has at least a one inch throw, the part that extends into the door jam when locked.

Additionally, hardened steel inserts to prevent the lock from being sawed off, and a reinforced strike plate with extra long mounting screws to anchor the lock effectively.

Deadbolts can be single or double-cylinder. Single cylinder locks operate with a key from the



outside and a thumb latch from the inside. Double-cylinder locks require a key to open on both sides and are useful on doors that have glass adjacent to or on the door. Check with local jurisdictions as some prohibit the use of double cylinder locks due to the potential hazard of becoming locked in the residence in the event of a fire. An alternative to doors adjacent to glass is installing security glazing to reinforce glass.

Sliding Glass Doors

Sliding glass doors can offer easy access into your home, especially to a potential burglar. To improve security on existing sliding glass doors, you can install keyed locking devices that secure the door to the frame; adjust the track clearances on the doors so they can't be pushed out of their tracks. A wood dowel or metal rod cut to the length of the door track will prevent the door from being opened while the rod is in place.

Windows

Most standard double-hung windows have thumb turn locks between the two window panels. Don't rely on these; they can be pried open or easily reached through a broken pane. Instead, install keyed locking devices to prevent the window from being raised from the outside, but ensure everyone knows where the keys are in case of emergency, such as fire.

An easy, inexpensive way to keep windows secured is to use the "pin trick." Drill an angled hole through the top frame of the lower window partially into the frame of the upper window, then insert a pin or nail into the hole. Make a second set of holes higher up so you can open the window for ventilation while maintaining security.

Consider an Alarm

Alarms may be a good investment, especially if you have valuables in your home, or live in an area with a history of break-ins.

- Check with several companies before you buy so you can decide what level of security you need. Do business with a reputable company, and check references before signing any contract.
- Learn how to use your system properly! Don't "cry wolf" by setting off false alarms.
- Other options include a sound detecting socket that plugs into a light fixture and makes the light flash when it detects certain noises, motion sensing outdoor lights that turn on when someone approaches, or lights with photo cells that turn on when it's dark and turn off in the morning.

Burglars Do More Than Steal

Burglars can commit crimes other than theft, from sexual assaults to homicides. Take heed if something looks questionable. If you come home to an open door or broken window, do not enter.



Call 9-1-1 from a cell phone or neighbor's phone and wait for police to arrive. At night, if you hear someone breaking in, leave safely and call police if you can. If you cannot leave, lock yourself in your

room and call police. If the intruder is in your room, pretend you are asleep. Remember that guns are responsible for many accidental deaths each year. If you own a gun for home protection, consider taking gun safety classes to learn about firearms, safe storage, the law, and ethical issues.

Contact Us

Contact your Pima County Sheriff's Department's Community Resources Team at (520) 741-4615 for Safety training, more safety information, or to learn how to establish a Neighborhood Watch in your community. Together we can make a difference in Pima County.



PIMA COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

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Crime Prevention Tips From
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Pima County
Sheriff's Department

HOME SECURITY



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