

## Burglary Statistics

By far, the most common threat to a home is burglary. According to the FBI, a burglary occurs somewhere in the United States every 15.4 seconds. By definition, the crime of burglary is a non-confrontational property crime that occurs when we are not at home. However, being a burglary victim can leave one feeling vulnerable and violated. To avoid becoming a victim, it is important to first gain an understanding of who commits burglaries and why.

The majority of home and apartment burglaries occur during the daytime when most people are away at work or school. Burglaries are committed most often by young males under 25 years of age looking for items that are small, expensive, and can easily be converted to cash. Favorite items are cash, jewelry, guns, watches, laptop computers, DVD players, game consoles and other small electronic devices. Burglars need quick cash for living expenses and drugs. Statistics tell us that 70% of the burglars use some amount of force to enter a dwelling, but their preference is to gain easy access through an open door or window. Ordinary household tools like screwdrivers, channel-lock pliers, small pry bars, and small hammers are most often used by burglars.

Although home burglaries may seem random in occurrence, they actually involve a selection process. Burglars choose unoccupied homes with the easiest access, the greatest amount of cover, and with the best escape routes. Here is a list of suggestions to minimize your risk by making your home unattractive to potential burglars.

### Lighting

Sufficient lighting around a home can be a deterrent to criminals who do not want to be seen when committing their crimes. Use porch lights, landscape lighting, and lighting around the doors to your home. Consider motion-activated lighting on the exterior of your home. The light doesn't have to be excessive — just enough so that neighbors or passersby could see someone around the outside of your home.



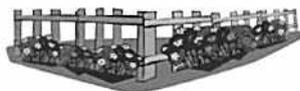
Most criminals prefer to take the easy path to stealing. Given a choice of homes in a neighborhood, they will choose to break into the homes that are darkest and/or most secluded. If your house is not among the easiest to burglarize, criminals will likely pass by it.

Lighting inside a home can also deter criminals, who may believe someone is home when the lights are on. Light timers are inexpensive and can be purchased at stores like Target and Home Depot.

### Landscaping

Remove objects that prevent you from seeing unwanted guests on your property. Trim low tree branches and keep shrubbery trimmed so that it does not provide a hiding place for criminals. Remove trees or bushes that block the view of windows or doors.

If you have fencing on your property, keep it in good condition so that it creates an effective barrier between your yard and the space around it.



### Doors

To significantly reduce the chance of being burglarized, lock your doors. Keep all doors closed and locked, whether you're home or not. Be sure that all doors, including inside garage doors, have deadbolt locks.

Finally, make an effort to keep the garage door closed at all times, whether or not you are home. One of the most common means for criminals to burglarize homes is to prey on those with open garage doors, even in the middle of the day. They may take valuables from the garage, or use the open garage to access the house itself.

### Windows

Windows are left unlocked and open at a much higher rate than doors. An open window, visible from the street or alley, may be the sole reason for your home to be selected by a burglar. Ground floor windows are more susceptible to break-ins for obvious reasons. Upper floor windows become attractive if they can be accessed from a stairway, tree, fence, or by climbing on balconies. Windows have latches, not locks, and therefore should have secondary blocking devices to prevent sliding them open from the outside. Inexpensive wooden dowels and sticks work well for horizontal sliding windows and through-the-frame pins work well for vertical sliding windows. For ventilation, block the window open no more than six inches and make sure you can't reach in from the outside and remove the blocking device or reach through and unlock the door.



## Be a Good Neighbor



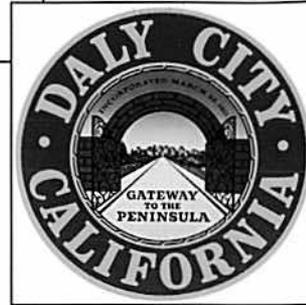
Good neighbors should look out for each other. Get to know your neighbors on each side of your home and directly across the street. Communicate often and establish trust. Ask your neighbors to watch out for your home or apartment when you are away. They can report suspicious activity to the police or to you. Good neighbors can pick up your mail, newspapers, and can inspect the outside or inside of your home periodically. Good neighbors will occasionally park in your driveway to give the appearance of occupancy while you are on vacation. Leave your vacation phone number and address with a neighbor so you can be reached in an emergency.

### What should you do if you see a burglary happening?

If you think there's a burglar in your neighbor's home, call the police immediately. Do NOT try to catch the suspect yourself. But if you do come face to face with a burglar in your own home, you should try to keep the burglar from panicking and attacking you. Chances are the burglar will run out of the house.

Anything material you lose is better than risking serious injury. After the burglar leaves, call the police.

Do NOT tidy up. You may disturb evidence the police could use to identify the burglars.



**333 90th Street  
Daly City, CA 94015  
650-991-8119  
<http://www.dalycity.org/alert>**

**In the event of an emergency,  
please immediately dial 911.**

### Useful Phone Numbers

General Information: 650-991-8119

Communications/Dispatch Center: 650-991-8092

Anonymous Tip Line: 650-873-2467

## Help Prevent Home Burglaries



**Help create a  
safer neighborhood.**

**Be aware of your  
neighborhood and what  
could be out of place.**

**When on vacation, have  
mail and newspaper  
delivery stopped.**

**Demand identification of  
any stranger at your door.**