

CRIME PREVENTION

HOW TO MAKE YOUR HOME SAFER

Crime prevention means reducing the chances for criminals to victimize you, your family, your neighborhood and community. It means protecting your property and teaching both kids and adults to be alert and aware. Increased concern and awareness by citizens of Simsbury helps maintain a low crime rate. Here are a few tips to make your home safer from crime:

1. **Exterior Doors** should be either metal or solid wood, at least 1 3/4" thick. For additional security, use strong door hinges and make sure they fit tightly in the frames, with the hinge pins on the inside.
2. **Locks** are essential to effective home security. Always keep doors and windows locked even if only leaving for a few minutes. Use quality keyed knobs as well as deadbolts. Deadbolts can withstand abuse. Look for such features as:
 - A bolt that extends at least 1" when in locked position.
 - A lock with hardened steel inserts to prevent the bolt from being sawed off.
 - A reinforced strike plate with extra long mounting screws to anchor the lock effectively.
3. **Sliding glass doors** can offer easy entry and visibility into your home. Some suggestions to improve security include:
 - Installing a keyed locking device that secures the door to the frame
 - Making sure that the track clearances are adjusted properly
 - Put a piece of wood or metal in the track at the bottom of the door to prevent the door from opening even if the lock is removed or accessed
4. **Windows** are usually standard, double-hung and have thumb-turn locks between the two window panels. An easy way to secure your windows is to drill an angled hole through the top frame of the lower window partially into the frame of the upper window. After the hole is

drilled, insert a nail or bolt. If the windows are used to ventilate or are normally kept open, drill a second set of holes.

5. **Lighting** is one of the most cost-effective deterrents to burglary. Indoor lighting may give the impression that a home is occupied. Consider using automatic timers. Outdoor lighting can eliminate hiding places. Motion control lights work best because they turn on when someone approaches.

- Install lights near entrances, porches, rear and side doors, garage doors, and any other point of entry.
- Place lights out of reach so the bulbs cannot be tampered with or removed.
- Aim some lights away from the house to see if anyone is approaching or in the area.
- Use energy efficient bulbs to save money.
- New solar activated lights are also available.

6. **Shrubs and Landscaping** should be maintained and manicured. Trim shrubbery that hides doors or windows and cut tree limbs down to prevent entrance into windows.

- There should be maximum visibility to and from your home.
- Overgrown shrubs could conceal criminal activity and provide hiding places.
- Store all your tools and ladders inside a locked storage area.
- Clearly display your house number so that emergency services can find your home quickly.

7. **Alarms** can be effective in protecting your home; however, may be expensive. Check with several companies and decide which level of security fits your needs.

- Look for an established company with positive references.
- Search for information on alarm systems online or contact the Better Business Bureau.
- Make sure you learn how to operate the system properly and do not be afraid to ask questions.

These are just a few tips to make your home safer. For more information or questions regarding crime prevention or home security, contact the Simsbury Police Department at 860-658-3100, or Officer Dunne at 860-658-3108. And always remember to alert the police to suspicious persons or activities. The police are here to make the community safer.