



HALL COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

CRIME PREVENTION UNIT



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Home Security Tips

Doorways

- Ensure that all exterior doors have a dead-bolt lock; a double-keyed deadbolt is preferred (be sure that the interior key is not left in the lock cylinder), especially if your entry door has glass windows or side-light windows that would allow a burglar to simply break the glass, reach in, and unlock the door.
- Dead bolts should have a minimum of 1" travel.
- Replace factory strike plate screws with screws about 3" in length, so that they reach far back into the wood studs of the door frame. The factory screws are usually very short and only go into the softwood of the door jamb.
- Never hide a key outside your door. Burglars know to look all around entryways for hidden keys (yes, even beneath that flower pot or that inconspicuous looking rock in the flower bed).
- Utilize a "Charlie Bar" or similar device on sliding glass doors. Depending on the door design, you may also consider driving a screw or installing a spacer in the top track to prevent the door from being lifted off the track and removed.

Windows

- Make sure every window has a lock, preferably one that can be secured with a key.
- Consider "pinning" windows if necessary by drilling a hole through both upper and lower sashes and inserting a metal pin, nail, or a screw. This method secures both parts of the window together so they cannot be slid up or down if the lock is defeated.

Lighting

- All approaches to exterior entry-ways should be illuminated by flood lights or a suitable porch-light.
- Motion sensor lights are excellent, but sometimes prove to be finicky. Be sure to adjust the sensor's position to cover the likely avenue of approach, and keep the sensor's lens clean and dust-free.
- Examine your home from all angles at night, first with all the exterior lights off and then with them all turned on. Note any obviously dark areas that may provide a criminal hidden access to a window, door, etc. and find a way to illuminate that spot.
- Conduct periodic lighting inspections to ensure seldom-used bulbs remain in good working order.

Landscaping

- Keep shrubbery and small trees clear from the front of windows and doors to eliminate hiding places for criminals to do their work. Exposure is their enemy.
- Make sure your landscaping doesn't grow to block your lighting.
- When developing your landscaping plan, consider what it will look like in 5, 10, or 15 years and make choices accordingly.

Alarm Systems

- Alarm systems are a great tool when utilized properly. There are many high-quality systems on the market with many options; shop around, ask neighbors about their satisfaction with their providers, and make an informed purchase.
- A professional alarm salesman and / or technician will spend time with you in your home explaining different features and options, but a few basic things to consider are:
 - o Are all of the primary entry points covered by contact sensors?
 - o Are all of the main travel corridors within the residence covered by motion detectors?
 - o If there are too many windows to feasibly put a contact sensor on each one, is a glass-break sensor installed so that those areas are still covered?
 - o Is monitoring done via telephone landline, wireless cellular, or a combination of both?
 - o Where is the alarm monitoring center located? Is it staffed by out-sourced personnel, or is it staffed by company employees?
 - o What is their alarm activation response procedure?
 - o What is their service policy?
- *Use the system!* An alarm system that's been installed but not utilized may serve as a small deterrent, but is essentially useless.
- When selecting your pass code, do not use anything obvious such as your house number, the last four digits of your phone number, etc.
- If you provide an alarm code to other persons for temporary purposes (house checks while on vacation, etc.), be sure to cancel that code as soon as possible.
- Regularly test your system in accordance with the manufacturer's guidelines.