



Is Your Home Vacation Ready?

Burglar-proof your home before you head to the beach



Summer is an ideal time to get away and relax, but if you're not careful it could be an ideal time for a burglary too. Did you know that most home break-ins occur in July and August, and that most thieves strike between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m., hours when you're likely at work and the kids (except in summer) are in school, giving robbers a(n open) window of opportunity?

Before your next family vacation, or even extended business trip, take steps to batten down the hatches and secure your home so you can spend time away from it completely worry-free. Here are a few tips...

FIRST, BURGLARY FAST FACTS*

JULY					
MO	4	11	18	25	
TU	5	12	19	26	
WE	6	13	20	27	
TH	7	14	21	28	
FR	1	8	15	22	29
SA	2	9	16	23	30
SU	3	10	17	24	31

07

AUGUST				
1	8	15	22	29
2	9	16	23	30
3	10	17	24	31
4	11	18	25	
5	12	19	26	
6	13	20	27	
7	14	21	28	

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- July and August have the most burglaries; February has the fewest
- Single-family houses in the middle of a block are more likely to be targeted than corner homes
- 33% of burglaries don't use force to get inside
- 34% of thieves enter through the front door; 23% through a first-floor window
- First room on a burglar's hit list: the master bedroom (for jewelry, safes, hidden cash)
- Houses without alarm systems are 2.7 times more likely to be burglarized
- Average time a burglar spends inside: 8 to 12 minutes

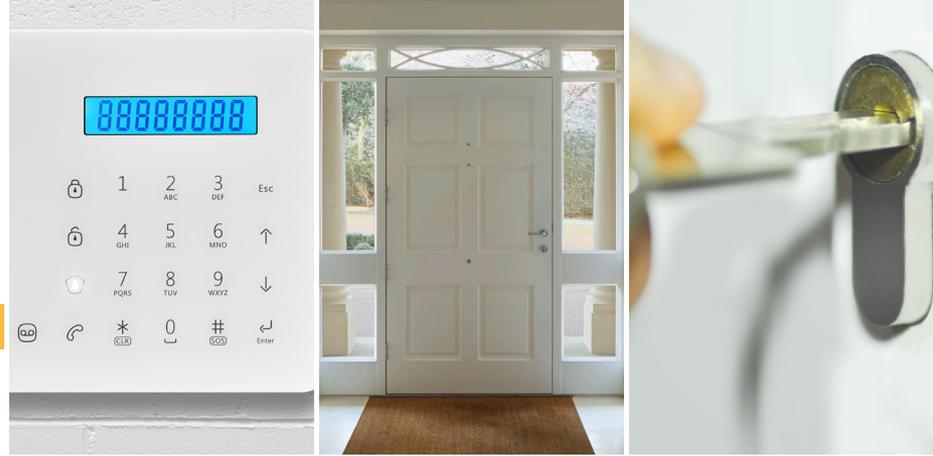
Knowing all of this, you'll want to take steps to safeguard your home whether you're on vacation or just out of town for a bit.

DON'T ANNOUNCE YOU'RE NOT AT HOME



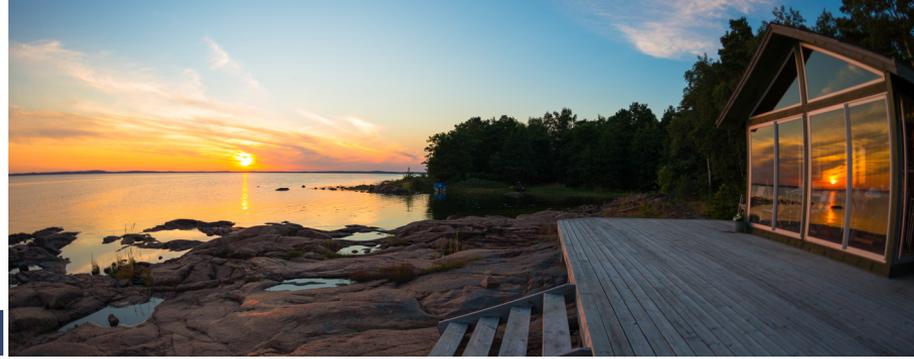
- Stop all newspaper and postal deliveries while you're gone. Nothing says "we're not home" like a pile of letters and bills spilling out of your mailbox or a week's worth of *The New York Times* heaped at your front door.
- We know you love social media but hold off on posting those selfies from the Grand Canyon or Instagramming that fabulous meal you had at Tavern on the Green until you're back home. Burglars have iPhones (maybe yours!) and routinely check Facebook, Twitter and Foursquare to see who's out of town.
- Have a neighbor put out your garbage cans (and take them back in) or just forgo collection while you're away.
- Put a couple lights on timers and program them to turn on and off per your regular routine. For example, light your family room and/or kitchen in the evening until your normal bedtime. Use an outdoor timer to illuminate your main entrances from dusk to dawn.
- If you have a landline phone, turn down the volume so its ringing can't be heard from outside, and don't be tempted to change your voicemail greeting to indicate you're on holiday.
- Simulate the flicker of a TV screen with [FakeTV](#) and fool outsiders into thinking you're binge-watching *Game of Thrones*.

TAKE SECURITY MEASURES



- Be sure all door and window locks work and fix any broken window panes before heading out.
- If you have a security service, alert it that you'll be away and leave the company's number—and your alarm code—with your emergency contacts.
- Retrieve any keys you've hidden on your property; re-hide them when you get back.
- If you're leaving a car behind, park it outside against the garage door to block access and stow any garage door remotes out of sight.
- Make sure your smoke alarms work.
- Ask a trusted friend or neighbor to check on your house every other day.

DON'T ANNOUNCE YOU'RE NOT AT HOME



- Unplug small appliances and electronics and put your water heater on vacation mode.
- Shut off the water supply to the dishwasher and washing machine to prevent freak flooding.
- Reset the thermostat to protect plants or pets left behind and keep the house cool enough to inhibit mold or mildew growth.
- Toss any food that might go bad while you're away and take out the (smelly) trash even if your garbage won't be collected during your absence.
- Stock the pantry with cold cereal, shelf-stable milk and coffee so your post-vacation breakfast will be one less thing to worry about.

* Source: [asecurelife.com](https://www.asecurelife.com)



B A I N S E A L

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