

# HOME SECURITY



## Home Security!

How Safe Are You At Home?

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## Home Security – Keeping Safe In Your Home

It is not unusual to be concerned about the safety of your house and its valuable assets from the insatiable eyes of the thieves that can strike anytime in your house and rip you off leaving you sitting in an empty house. Be assured, since thinking about the safety of your house is nothing but natural and the best thing is that you can do a lot to protect your house in that respect. Just like you take care of your computer by installing the latest anti-viruses, anti-spywares and other firewalls, protecting your house from the burglars is no more different. It is important that you ask yourself some questions, which would help you to determine how safe your house is. They would include questions like whether you have ladders or any other tools that a thief could use to break into your house, whether you have any sort of alarm which could alert you of any possible break-in, etc. If all these questions point out that your house isn't safe from the burglars, it is about time that you do something about it.

Firstly, you have got to remember that thieves would generally avoid those homes that are always occupied by residents. However, mistaking this fact to mean that your family would be safe could be the greatest mistake that you could have ever made. Burglars would stop from doing anything, which means that to get to the loot, they could even harm your family. However, you would be just as helpless when you have been robbed off your belongings when you are not there in your home at all. Now that you know about the risks that involve with respect to a burglary, it is important that you be aware of some common sense that could come a long way with respect to protecting your house as well as its valuable assets from any possible break-in and the best thing about these tips is that it is much more easier than the painstaking installation of the anti-viruses that you do in order to protect your computer systems from any virus threats.

**Don't forget the keys:** Handing out the keys of your home even to your friends could be the biggest mistake that you may have ever done. It is important that every family member knows where exactly you keep your keys all the time so that you know what to do if any of them are missing. Never use those traditional techniques of hiding your keys under the mat or in a flower vase, since that's exactly where the robber would look for them in the first place. And always keep separate key bunch such as for your home, for your car, etc.

**Strangers beware:** this may seem like the same advice that your mother always gave you when you were a child. Never let any stranger into your house come what may. It is important that you teach your kids to follow this advice all the time. If someone needs some help and asks if he or she wants to make a call, don't let them in your house. You can make the phone call for them if they really are in any kind of trouble.

**Keep your doors and windows locked all the time:** This tip goes without sayings that in your absence, always keep your house locked, including your windows. This proves to be a great

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habit and it greatly reduces any chances of any break-ins. Locking the windows would also include locking the windows of your attic.

**Don't show off your valuables:** Your house is your home and not a museum or a jewelry shop where you put up all the valuables on display. Doing this is only inviting unwanted attention from the criminals who lurk around your neighborhood looking for an opportunity to strike big.

The last tip and probably the most important one would be to remain alert all the time. Home security systems are a good investment and if you don't already have one, go get one right away.

## Home Security Is Not About Gates

In today's world home security is no longer about having gates locked or a dog prowling the yard. Today, home burglaries take place with alarming frequency. Federal statistics indicate that home burglaries are climbing toward ten percent from 2004. Why such a rise? The reason is that security in convenience stores, malls and gas stations are using monitoring cameras and security alarms to protect their employees and assets. This causes the thief to seek other means of revenue. Your home!

There are seven reasons to consider a security system for your peace of mind:

- 1) As stated earlier, home burglaries and invasion have risen from past statistics. The thieves or drug users of today have no problem entering your unguarded home and taking whatever money they need or items they are after. In addition, more families are two income families. This means there's no one at home for large portions of time. If there are children, often they are left with a nanny or babysitter. In some instances these individuals need to monitor.
- 2) The installation of a security system will help the homeowner protect property and possessions against any intruder and, depending on the homeowners needs, can even give an "eye" into the activity of those looking after your children. It's an effective way to protect your home and the loved ones.
- 3) The surveillance systems on the market today are relatively inexpensive, when compared to home protection. In addition, most surveillance cameras are easy to install when following mounting and networking instructions, if there are more than one camera involved in your home protection plan.

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4) Most surveillance systems of today can be integrated and interfaced to alert security personnel or police. In an emergency situation, the appropriate home or business security system, can instantly transmit a call to 911 and simultaneously record the activity. This is very useful information for insurance companies and the courts.

5) Surveillance cameras are able to record any event that takes place on a property. In the event of vandalism or fire, the recorded event will definitely assist law enforcement in prosecution and insurance companies in processing a claim.

6) Home surveillance should not be considered as merely a present investment of protection for the property owner. Home security systems increase the marketable value of one's property. Today's property buyer wants the security of the investment.

7) The security system packages in today's market are various and diverse. This variety gives the homeowner or renter a wide range of options in developing a quality security program. For apartment renters subscribing to a monthly security program could prove to be an economical way to protect possessions and loved ones. These subscriptions operate much like subscribing to the telephone or cable company.

In today's world home security has become more than making sure the doors are locked and gates secured. The criminals of today have become adept to navigating simple security systems. But with a comprehensive security plan the homeowner can record these navigations, should a thief dare. With the appropriate surveillance system loved ones can be protected from unsuspected individuals. And lastly, surveillance systems are very useful to law enforcement and the courts. A dog's testimony is nothing but a yelp, but the evidence captured by a surveillance camera is a bite in crime!

## ***The Instinct Of Being Secure***

As animals do various things to provide security of their home, man being an animal is no different. He does a lot towards the improvement and security of his home. History shows that man from the beginning of time covered the entrance to their caves with large boulders, preventing any animal or rain, snow or any other severe effects of climate.

As time moved forward and he was able to train animals like dogs, he found a guard for his home. After the invention of doors, locks and keys, it made his home safer. But with the passage of the time, with the evolution of the human brain, there also came an increase in crime. A simple lock was not enough to protect his home. With the enhancement in technology, various new means of home protection was introduced.

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According to a survey, forty percent of home burglars were able to enter houses due to the lack of secure locks and doors. Electronic locks with some sophisticated software provided the ability to track and access the locks. The user can open the lock connected to the network just by the click of a button. This kind of technology is widely used in offices and commercial areas.

Another outstanding progress made was the invention of the fingerprint door lock. These locks are designed to attain a very high level of security. Their sensors have the ability to recognize fingerprints. Biometric fingerprint Internet banking USB key, Biometric fingerprint time and attendance and Biometric fingerprint embedded modules are some of the stunning examples of fingerprint locks.

Grade 1 ANSI (American National Standard Institute) launched a wide variety in deadbolt locks for exterior usage such as the outer door or the door of the garage. Due to the increasing demand for ANSI locks, their replica products are also widely available in market. It is very difficult to distinguish between the real product and the duplicate, but they cannot provide a quality as that provided by ANSI locks.

Regardless of the type of lock, the quality of the door is very important. Its thickness, texture and lock selection play a key role in home security. The simplest and the most insecure lock is the knob lock. Deadbolts are of two kinds: internal and external. To secure the home with the best lock on the door is the cheapest way compared to other home security items such as alarms, cameras and security networking.

The Internet helps in the selection of an appropriate door along with the right lock for their homes. Many websites introduce the complete range of products in conjunction with their prices for any particular company. Many companies provide special offers to motivate people by fulfilling its demand with top quality products.

Statistics by the US bureau of Justice have revealed that thefts on property were at a staggering fourteen million and eighty three percent of these attempts were successful with the thieves entering the building or house located on the property. Using the right security alarm can help protect you, your property and your family from any untoward incidents that can cause danger. Home security alarms, security systems and automated monitoring systems have been designed to send messages, calls or make loud sounds if your house has been intruded.

It is a better to be prepared by enhancing your home security since nothing can be more important than your home. This is where you and your family and belongings. Once you have these systems in place only then can you be sure of a sound sleep and a home with the latest technologies is definitely not an easy target for burglars. There are numerous places to get your home security in order, from getting experts to install it or even installing it yourself. If you want to install it yourself then there are forums available online that will guide you through the whole process and even show you loopholes that you could miss.

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## Protecting Your Home With A Security System

We all worry about the security of our homes, especially when we have a family to take care of. How do we make our homes as threat-proof as possible without turning it into Fort Knox? Obviously, nobody wants to live in a prison, but is there anyway of making your home completely safe from all intruders? The answer to this question is quite obviously a no! If someone wants to get into your home, they will do, but there are many ways and means of ensuring that your home is as protected as it can be and also for ensuring that it doesn't look like an easy target.

Intruders look for homes that appear vulnerable. If you have an open window or gate, or valuables in full view of anyone that happens to pass by, you are increasing the dangers of your home security being breached. One way in which you can repel any intruders is by having a clearly visible alarm fitted to the front and back of your home. You can get some great "dummy" alarms that are less costly than full home security systems, but still look like the real thing. It just means that it isn't worth the intruder breaking in to find out whether or not it is real!

Home Security Systems can be a little costly, especially if you decide to have a fully monitored system, as this generally includes annual subscription charges. However, a price cannot be put on you and your family's safety. So if you can afford to pay more for a better quality system, it could prove to be a good investment, especially if you have suffered the traumatizing experience of having a break-in.

If used correctly, the security systems can be a great relief for you and your loved ones, and reduces a lot of aggravation. Claiming after a break-in, with the police and insurance companies, is a very time consuming and irritating process, and anything can reduce that risk, is obviously a good thing.

When thinking of investing in a home security system, you should think of how the cost outweighs the risk. Better quality systems will incur a bigger cost, but if you are in an area where home security is threatened regularly, the cost may be worth it in the long run. You should make sure you shop around for the best deals and arm yourselves with as much information as possible so you know exactly what options are available and how much different packages cost. Don't just opt in for the first one that you may see, as you could find that other companies may offer a cheaper deal. You should also find out exactly what is offered in your deal before you sign on the dotted line, and work out if there are any extra hidden charges you may have to fork out for.

There are so many options available, from the simplest to the ridiculously complicated depending on the level of security you are looking for. Obvious things like signs that say your

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home is protected and visible CCTV cameras and alarm systems are by far the easiest and cheapest way to make sure that an intruder knows that there will be trouble if he or she decides they want to break in to your house. Broadcast the fact that you are protected and you will have less of a risk than those who have no security whatsoever.

All in all, the decision of home security systems falls on you and your personal choices, but there are people and websites dedicated to helping you find the best ways to protect your home. After all, nobody can put a price on the safety of not only you, but your family as well, and we all know the devastating effects burglary has on a family. It really does pay to be protected.

## **Can Home Security gates be useful?**

With the level of crime across the country seemingly getting worse, it is hard for homeowners to ignore the need for adequate security for their homes. Especially for those who live in the suburbs or in the country areas that are not so well populated one aspect of securing the home that needs to be considered is getting home security gates.

Home security gates are mainly used to limit access to your property thus enabling you to have some control over who gets onto your property for whatever reason. The same is true for persons who you do not want to see or entertain.

There are many advantages of getting home security gates installed. Most home security gates operate via a keypad, which will open the gates at the entry of a code or password. There may also be an intercom system attached to the whole system where whenever someone comes to the gate they will use the intercom to identify themselves without you having to leave the house.

Home security gates provide homeowners with some degree of security and operate as a buffer between your home and the undesirables out there. These gates offer protection from thieves and robbers who are always waiting for the opportunity to take advantage of any situation. Home security gates are not easy to force open so intruders cannot get into your property using a vehicle.

Home security gates are very easy and convenient to operate. A remote is usually used to open the gates so you will not have to leave the house or get out of your car to open the gates. They usually operate on a timer so once a number of seconds have passed they will automatically begin to close. Some gates even have a sensor that will detect when an object is in the way and will not close until it has been removed. You can also close the gates by using the remote.

They also give you some safety where children are concerned. Children can be protected from persons entering the property hence they will be safely inside and pets cannot wander off the

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property. Other animals can also be kept off the property where they can do damage to the home or cause harm to someone on the property.

You can also use them to provide you with some degree of privacy. These gates can be made of many different materials and if you get one that is solid wood or metal you can prevent persons from peeping or spying on you and your home. They can also be used to stop drivers from using your gateway or driveway as way to turn their vehicles or to park them.

Another benefit of having home security gates is that of lower insurance rates. Many insurance companies will offer you better premiums if your home and its perimeter are well protected. If they are well designed, home security gates can add value to your home and if they are stylish and pleasing to the eye, can also improve how the home looks.

Along with advantages come some disadvantages. One of the major problems with most home security gates is the use of electrical power. These systems work well under normal conditions but if there is any loss of the power supply the gate will also lose power and cease to work the way it was intended. It will become necessary to acquire a backup power source like a generator. Some systems however, can be operated manually if the power is lost.

Many of the home security gates can be costly, especially if they come with security cameras at the gate so you can see who is at the gate. The cost will increase depending on the size of the gate you want for your home and the type of material you would prefer to have it made from.

They have to be serviced on a regular basis. As with any machine they can malfunction or simply go bad, so regular servicing may be needed. But the bottom line is everything comes for a price and so does security for home. Although home security gates are costly and requires maintenance, the security provided by it is really beneficial.

## **Driveway Alarms**

Driveway alarm is probably the best option that you can have with respect to efficient and inexpensive home security systems. Getting your home equipped with an effective driveway alarm does a lot more than just alerting you of any possible break-in. They are probably one of the most important aspects with respect to home security systems. Although home security surveillance cameras do their task pretty well with respect to monitoring your home, installing a driveway alarm should just as well complete the job by assuring hundred percent safety of your home. They act as the best security safety measure with respect to denying any unauthorized person from entering your property.

What exactly are these driveway alarms and how can they be so helpful? Well, for starters, driveway alarms are based on the concept of motion sensor technology which means that they can detect any movement that goes on within the range of their motion sensors. As soon as any

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motion is detected, an alarm is sounded wherein the transmitter propels a signal to the receiving end thereby making the house owners vigilant of an unusual activity in the property premises. The basic objective of driveway alarms is that they help to inform the home owner of any unusual activity regarding any unauthorized person in the driveway.

One thing that must always be kept in mind is that these security systems should be thought of as a one-time asset and never be thought as a liability. Since there are no maintenance charges in this respect, which usually drains off some dollars from the homeowner's funds due to constant, recurring costs. One of the best things about these driveway alarm systems is that they come in many different varieties that suit the taste of the client. This may include the standard driveway alarm systems and the wireless driveway alarm systems. Due to their easy and inexpensive installation techniques, it really doesn't matter whether you want to install them in the convenience of you home or even your business for that matter, since all these alarms are made to do is to notify you of any intruder coming near your house or even your business premises.

These alarm systems basically consist of two main devices, i.e., the transmitter and the receiver wherein the transmitter sends a signal to the receiver that then sounds off an alarm that informs the house owner of any possible intruder in his premises. Due to the driveway alarm's ease of use, it is perfect for residential as well as commercial purposes. All thanks to the recent advent in the field of technology, many of these driveway alarms are even designed for malls, residents as well as businesses in the form of automatic doors and gates which also helps in creating a good impression for customers as well as guests. Some of the types of the driveway alarms that are used nowadays include wired alarms, wireless alarms, infrared driveway alarms and the metal detection alarms.

These alarms are so flexible that they act as multi-functional security systems not only for the driveways, but in other areas too. These alarms can do a lot in protecting your beloved cars and bikes from the thieves who are always hunting for their next catch. Another advantage of these driveway alarms is that they usually act as your first line of defense against any possible break-ins thereby giving the burglars an idea of the home security systems in your house as a result of which they usually chuck the entire idea of robbing any of your valuable assets.

There is often this debate about which driveway alarm should be used although the answer is pretty simple to guess. The wireless driveway alarms have more benefits than their traditional counterparts, i.e., the wired ones. That's because the wireless ones are relatively easy to install and they never act as a giveaway to thieves, which is not always the case with respect to the wired driveway alarms.

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## Warning Signs

Trespassers could be a real pain especially when they lurk around your property during your absence. Although not all the trespassers have to be feared of, however, when it comes to criminals, it is time that you should always be on your guard. Well, you're in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and all thanks to the technology, you need not worry about those things anymore. Therefore, when we talk about security systems, let's just say that you'd be surprised to see what technology has to offer you in that respect. And the best thing is that many of these security system options are really inexpensive since safety is the main concern of these security systems manufacturers.

The best solution when it comes to home security or even security for any private property would be using warning signs and decals. They are probably the best options available since they are not only very cheap but they are also very practical. Besides, these options act as ideal tools for the people who are quite comfortable with low-tech tools. Warning signs and decals can be helpful during various situations. They not only help in warding off the trespassers but also help in keeping the criminals at bay. Let's just take a situation, so that you will get a clear picture of the idea of using warning signs and decals for your home or even your personal property. If a criminal even manages to get past your gates or even the guard dog for that matter and if he is just about to break into your door and window, he immediately sees a sign- "This place is under 24hrs camera surveillance". What does he do next? Four out of five times, he will just bail off, unless he knows about diffusing the systems. Now, putting up this sign does not necessarily mean that you should have camera surveillance. That's exactly the kind of trick that the warning signs and decals play on the prowlers and other people who are not authorized to enter your house. These signs work just like the way the scarecrow does its job in the farms.

This means that the best thing about these warning signs and decals is that they serve as an extremely effective warning even if you don't have any security systems and other surveillance in your house or your property for that matter. Therefore, if you are one of those prospective customers who are looking for something really affordable and easy to install, warning signs and decals are just the thing for you. These affordable and practical options help in warning any of the intruders and keeping them at bay, which can be easily mounted up on a wall or even on a post for that matter. Another advantage of these signs is that they also come in the form of stickers, which easily sticks to any surface; even the glass ones and they are also easily visible.

One thing that you should remember is that these warning signs and decals always form the first line of defense. So, sometimes, it is possible that they don't work all the time. In case of crafty criminals, these signs don't always do the trick. That's because, some of them will actually just ignore the signs and move on to break into your house. During situations like these, it is always advisable that you get additional security systems like camera surveillance, alarm systems, etc. Therefore, if the warning signs and the decals fail, you can always bank on the security systems to work its charm. Installing these signs isn't all that difficult. They're just as easy as sticking stickers to the wall. So, warning signs and decals definitely act as deterrents

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but at the same time, they also act as guides to rescuers during any rescue operations especially in case of floods and earthquakes.

## Home Security Lights

The first step to prevention of home invasion would be as simple as a security light. It keeps away those who want to illegally enter in plain sight and also provides comfort for the home owner. Recently added technologies such as alarms, security cameras, security networking and other accessories cost much more as compared to home security lighting.

Motion sensor lighting control is one of the most outstanding inventions in this modern era. A survey shows that 60% of people say that home security lights are the best way to secure their homes from burglars. Solar Centurion is wonderful for security lighting or expediency lighting in the yard, garage and gate of the home and even on streets.

These security lights turn on by means of a sensor. The sensor, which is used in these lights, is of two kinds, infrared and microwave. Microwave sensors are more widely used when compared to the other one. These sensors send out very high frequency radio waves. The sensor has the ability to tell when someone is coming under the light as the person or the object suspends the radio waves. When the disruption is sensed, this sets the light to turn on. The second type is the infrared sensor. These sensors will respond to the temperature and heat. When a warm object comes in the range of the sensor, it will trigger the light to turn on. Other examples of home security lighting include low-pressure sodium vapour lights and floodlights.

The lights, which are used, are of two kinds, external lights and internal lights. Light in the home lies in the category of internal lights such as the lights of bedroom, bathroom and kitchen etc. Mostly homes have passive infra-red (PIR) restricted tungsten halogen floodlights. This is available outside the home such as in the yard and at the gate or in the street. Some of the advanced lights have automatic system to turn on and off. Some PIR units have been formed to chime as well as turn on the light.

Designer series of many light-manufacturing companies consist of motion sensor technology with decorative light fittings. This makes the light more attractive and striking. In some cases the multi lens technology is used which provides the safety at its peak point. Discounted and low energy light bulbs are often used in those states where crime is at very high level and the income is very low. In a nutshell we may say that the home security light has the easiest installation and cheapest way of security.

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Some of the advantages of using outdoor motion sensor security lights are when you are away from home and the sensors detect any motion within their range, the lights will brighten the entire yard or direction they are pointed in. This will definitely give you a better sense of security since it has been proved that homes with security lights are less prone to be attacked by burglars. Security lights are manufactured to suit every budget and come in various designs, from wireless to ones that are to be fit.

If you are home late, and its dark the motion lights are quite a blessing at such times. On a funny note it acts as an effective pest control mechanism, keeping away skunks, raccoons, rabbits etc because none of these pest like to be in bright light. Security light help in saving costs as they only come on when required unlike other light that need to be left on day and night. Studies by security light manufactures have shown that Energy savings can vary from ten to fifteen percent of the entire lighting power use which is mainly because of the use of the EMS or energy management system technology.

With all the pros mentioned, the outdoor motion sensor security lights can be quite a gain to the home security and the final decision to get one is definitely left to homeowners.

## **Wireless Home Security Cameras**

This subject could truly be a topic for debate because many people are for the wireless technology and on the other hand, many are for the wired technology. That's because, people just can't seem to make up their mind on deciding which one is better than the other. So, when it comes to deciding which surveillance system to go for, people just start to rack their brains. Well, for those who are confused with respect to making up their mind, simply read on? Although there are many ways for making your house secure and protecting them from unwanted attention, i.e., from thieves and other unauthorized persons, setting up a wireless home security camera system may as well be the best decision that you could ever make.

Safety is the main concern for house owners these days and who is to blame them for that. Considering the crime rates on the rise, any security measure that you take for your house may just not feel good enough. This is where the wireless home security camera systems come into play. These systems are ideal for assuring complete safety of your home, come what may. The best thing that you can do is invest in a wireless home security camera that works on motion sensors. The motion sensors help in detecting any movement in any area of your house. When these motion sensors are safely installed all over your house and when these sensors are connected to the camera, you can be assured that you have successfully secured your house. That's because, on the event that these sensors detect any movement, they effectively send the signal to the camera which are also placed at the key points of surveillance areas and the camera simply capture the moment by recording the entire event.

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Another advantage of the wireless home security cameras is that they don't consume electricity like the way the wired security camera systems do. That's because these wireless cameras don't need electricity since they operate with the help of batteries. Therefore, you're also indirectly saving on the power costs. And the best thing about these cameras is that they don't consume too much power from the batteries. Security cameras always have the benefit to act as evidence during thefts and other criminal activities. The footages that these cameras capture can be used to bring down these criminals so that they don't commit such acts in future. That's because situations may arise when you might be on a vacation during the weekend and you return to find that there has been a break-in in your home. In this case, only such security cameras act as evidence and help you putting such criminals into jail.

In case of buying a wireless home security camera, you would think that cost would be a huge factor. Well, it is not since the entire equipment would cost you hardly around \$50 to \$75. This makes the wireless home security camera probably the best deal that one could get with respect to home surveillance systems. And the best part is that the installation process hardly takes about half an hour. Another advantage would be that some of the wireless cameras are so small, that they can even fool the craftiest of all the thieves since these cameras can virtually be hidden anywhere. Some wireless home security camera options also include the night vision mode that makes it easily possible to record any suspicious activity during the night. Therefore, it goes without saying that wireless home security cameras enjoy more advantages than the wired ones. These security systems are ideal to protect your home, your assets and your loved ones from any danger whatsoever. Besides, wired cameras often give away the thieves as soon as they see any wires anywhere. This is one aspect where the wireless home security cameras always capitalize upon.

## **Closed Circuit Television**

Corporations and government agencies have used Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) to monitor building exteriors and interiors, and control traffic, for many years. Most of us have seen cameras mounted high on the corner of company buildings, affixed high on a parking lot light pole, and even attached to traffic lights. With these devices security and law enforcement are able to observe, record, and quickly respond to any odd activity viewed on a security monitor.

Closed circuit systems have been a surveillance tool used not only by law enforcement, the military, and corporations but is becoming the first line of protection for homeowners. Cameras, strategically placed around home, can project any outside activity to monitors inside the home. Closed Circuit Television's are capable of broadcasting surveillance into a network. With such a system the property owner is able to observe activity on their personal monitor, call for help, and have cops on the scene before an intruder realizes what's going on.

Closed Circuit Television is a method of home security utilizing a camera or system of cameras to monitor activity around a perimeter of a property. Depending on the degree of protection

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desired, Closed Circuit Television systems can communicate with other property protection such as alarms. Many alarm systems are designed to trigger the camera to begin recording and continue recording until the alarm is disarmed.

Earlier Closed Circuit Television models were relatively expensive and purchased primarily by government agencies and corporations. But, as a result of new technology, these systems have become more affordable for the homeowner and small business owner.

Technological developments of Closed Circuit Television systems have made it possible for small business owners and homeowners to monitor their property, possessions, and employees remotely, and in real time, from another location. The homeowner can access the server controlling their home camera system, for example, and monitor all activity in their home from their office.

Other advances in Closed Circuit Television technology are infrared night vision and Passive Infrared motion detection capabilities. Another development is Pan Tilt Zoom camera systems, which are capable of rotating both horizontally and vertically, and can zoom in on a specific area on a property. Current models can even connect to the USB port of personal computers, allowing the homeowner to produce and save digital images of property activity.

Closed Circuit Television systems can also record activity. This is helpful visual evidence for law enforcement and juries. In one instance, law enforcement was able to quickly apprehend a kidnapper and convict him because a store Closed Circuit Television system had recorded the kidnap. Moreover, Closed Circuit Television systems do deter people from stealing. Seeing cameras on a property will make a thief think twice about breaking into a building.

Studies have shown that after 24 months of using a Closed Circuit Television crime rates have reduced by twenty one percent when compared to twenty-four months earlier to the introducing the Closed Circuit Television systems. Though use of Closed Circuit Television systems has reduced crime rates in the location that they have been used, it has been criticized for causing a potential displacement effect. In other words, the crimes that could have taken place have just moved to another location or are committed at a different time.

## **Security Cameras In Your House**

We all know that home security is important but at the end of the day we still put it off and only realize the consequences of our aloofness when we suffer a break in. If you want to protect your family and home you must take care of home security before you have a problem. Once you move in your house, you must ensure that the doors are strong and have the locks changed as well, since you cannot be too sure of the copies of keys that are out there. The next thing

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you must check is that the windows are sturdy and lockable. Have an alarm system installed if you travel a lot or just are not at home during the day.

Getting an external security camera would be a better idea since you would know exactly who came to your home when you were not in. Security cameras are now available cheap making surveillance systems affordable and are not just used in mansions and shopping centers anymore. When people install security cameras the risks of being victims to robberies is reduced tremendously since the cameras scare off probable criminals. For homeowners that live in neighborhoods that have seen a number of robberies, using security cameras can be quite a relief.

In the past surveillance systems used to cost a fortune but today they are available in the electronic departments of retail stores at low prices. It costs around a hundred dollars to get a waterproof night-vision cameras with a monitor, which is quite a reasonable amount. Besides this, getting security cameras can also help in lowering the insurance rates you pay and this can be quite helpful since it covers the cost of purchasing security cameras.

If you attach a VCR to the security system you install, it will give you better peace of mind. If ever you do become a victim of a robbery, you will have the criminal caught in the act on tape and can hand it over to the police who will be able to nail the thief quickly and easily. You can also install split VCR's that have to be changed every twenty-four hours or security cameras that that would directly download video footage to your PC as it records.

When you choose a security camera system you have to consider a number of details, so you must prepare yourself prior to shopping for it. You must check for power outlets available or if you would like to install a battery powered system that would be a whole lot expensive. It would also need you to invest time to check batteries and change them as it depletes, else the security camera would be of better use as a toy. It would always be a better idea to get power outlets fixed by the electrician incase your home does not have any near the entrances.

Another factor to consider before you purchase a security camera is where you would like to install the security camera and the number of locations around your home you would like to cover. Getting the large windows under camera surveillance would be a good idea along with the obvious entrances to your home. There are a number of advanced systems that can be used with security systems so that your home has that extra protection. The packages available have pre set numbers that can be called or message delivery if a break in has been detected.

Security cameras can make things easy and protect your family and valuables when you are out of the house or on vacation.

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## Choosing a Surveillance Product

Today, while homeowners are away making a living or away on vacation, homes are left empty for large amounts of time, leaving homes and possessions unprotected. With burglaries and home invasions more pervasive than in past times, homeowners are taking measures to protect themselves from these invasive threats. One technique on the rise is the use of surveillance equipment.

There are many different types of security and surveillance products on the market, from high-tech surveillance systems to do-it-yourself alarm systems. Having a well-designed plan and choosing the appropriate surveillance product for your home is important for optimal security and protection.

Fake surveillance cameras are exactly that, fake! They are inexpensive look-alikes that are designed only as deterrent. These fake cameras are only mounted to a building and are not wired to anything, therefore unable to record. The only advantage to this type of camera is its price and ease of installation.

If your security plan requires the monitoring of only one area a wired surveillance camera may best serve your purposes? These cameras are fairly simple to install. However, there are models on the market that do require specialized technicians for installation.

Wireless surveillance cameras, in comparison to wired systems, are more flexible. They can easily be relocated throughout a property and there is no wiring to reveal the cameras location. And unlike its wired counterpart, these cameras can be networked with greater ease. Following the installation instructions, the property owner can install many wireless devices.

A more conspicuous device is the covert surveillance camera. These systems are the James Bond of the surveillance camera market. These cameras can be placed in regular looking items, such as a doll or potted plant, and allow the property owner to observe activity without provoking suspicion. These systems, although more expensive, are a great interior monitoring device to observe the activity of, for example, nannies, babysitters, and store cashiers.

For areas where lighting is low, night vision surveillance cameras are recommended. This style of camera produces strictly black and white images. To produce a black and white image requires less light than the production of color. Many corporations, shopping malls, and parking complexes use this type of camera to monitor their parking lots because of the lighting situations found in those locations.

The most common surveillance camera purchased by homeowners is the home surveillance camera. Generally, this camera system is packaged into a complete kit, providing the

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homeowner with all the necessary wiring and hardware, to include detailed instruction, for installation.

There are many surveillance products that can be used for home security. Their mechanisms differ on the situation in which they are to be used. The most basic is the home security cameras that can observe and record every corner of a home using internal and external night vision cameras. If you are indecisive of the surveillance product you need a security camera kit can be pretty handy since all you need to do is plug and play. Another useful surveillance product is the security quad processor that is capable of networking multiple security cameras and playing them on one monitor. There are other useful products as well that can be found and are convenient security experts like RF modulators, DVR recorders, Internet monitoring of security cameras, wires and other accessories.

There are many factors to consider when planning the purchase of a home surveillance system and the success of any security system is dependent on the expertise of the installer. The layout of the home, the exterior lighting, wiring systems, and other factors must be evaluated as part of your home protection plan. Most professional security companies highly recommend that a qualified technician perform the installation of a surveillance system. The Internet provides listings for practically every home security need, the producers of the products available, and detailed information about the company's products and reputation.

## **Hidden Cameras**

Hidden video cameras, also known as "nanny cams" or "spy cams", are tiny cameras designed to be concealed in almost any conceivable item, from a shirt button to a houseplant. Since the advent of 911, this type of camera has become a security and monitoring tool used in many public places like airports, railway terminals, shopping malls, or any other public place where monitoring the activity of people is important to security and crime prevention.

Hidden cameras also provide a means for homeowners to observe activity around their home without the camera being visible. These cameras are useful in keeping an "eye" on the nanny or babysitter when parents leave the care of their children to these individuals. Recently developed remote monitors make it possible to observe activity inside your house while you are away. For example, a homeowner can monitor activity from the office or any other location with Internet access. When connected to a recorder, hidden cameras can record that activity.

Hidden cameras are produced in wired and wireless designs. Wireless cameras require batteries to operate. Wired devices require hardwiring to a power source. The advantage of wireless systems is obvious. Wireless systems continue to operate even in the event of a power failure.

The technology used in most hidden cameras is the Charge Coupled Device, or CCD. CCDs transfer images into electronic impulses and send that information to a monitor, recorder, or

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both. The formats for these cameras vary from ¼” to 1”. The most common formats used by homeowners are the 1/4” or 1/3” sizes. CCDs are relatively inexpensive and provide good images.

Hidden cameras come in two basic color model types. The black and white model performs better in low light applications and is less costly than the color models. The color model on the other hand can transmit color images, making identification and description much easier and accurate. High quality cameras are able to alternate between black & white and color as the homeowner desires. However, with the improvements in security technology and decreasing prices for surveillance cameras, the color models are more frequently chosen over the black and white models. In fact, some vendors no longer distribute the black and white surveillance cameras.

The use of hidden cameras is a controversial subject and there are laws governing their use. In some places hidden cameras are totally banned or are against the law to operate unless certain criteria are met. It is important for anyone considering the purchase of a surveillance camera to check with local laws and regulations regarding the use of surveillance cameras where they live or work.

Hidden cameras can be very effective for people who own businesses, and should be seen as a necessity especially by shop owners. It would give you peace of mind to know what’s going on in the shop when you are not in. Here are some unique Hidden Camera devices that can be useful; one of them is the SONY dream machine that can identify concealed actions in your dorm room or bedroom. The other is the Universal EXIT Sign surveillance camera that can be fitted without difficulty and catch-thieving employees easily.

An effective hidden camera is the Down-View Smoke Detector that is very functional when set up on the ceiling. It can be mounted at various spots like stock receiving doors and above a cash register and ensures that employees or customers do not steal from you.

Like these there are many other unique hidden camera devices like thermostat-hidden camera, Neon Blue Wall Clock device, Emergency Lights device, Flower Pot cam, Motion Detector camera and plenty more.

## **Home Security Basics**

When it comes to assuring the safety of your home, one thing that you have to remember is that compromise is not an option in this respect. You would always want the best for your home and you would never want to lose out on your assets by way of thefts when you could have done something about the entire situation. Therefore, in order to familiarize yourself with the basic concepts of home security, it is very important for you to know the various terms that are used in the home security systems front. This would include identifying the systems that are

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ideal for your house and ignoring the systems that are a bit too much of an add-on for your home. One thing that you should know is that there are many options available when it comes to choosing home security systems and any quick decisions in this respect could just as well be the gravest of errors that you could have ever made.

You will find that most of the home security systems that you may come across aren't that difficult to install. Sometimes, with respect to finding the right security systems, you may just feel to give up your search since it could be frustrating to find the one that exactly suits your home safety needs. That's because, if you opt for one home security system, there will always be a question lurking at the back of your mind and each of these questions will always begin with the two words "what if..." Therefore, in order to make this process much easier, it is important that you identify your needs and what you expect your home security surveillance systems to do for you with respect to providing the best security system that your house could ever ask for.

Surveillance circuit monitors and other security systems are the ones that you usually tend to come across nowadays and the best part about these systems that they are not all that difficult to operate as one would imagine them to be otherwise. Another advantage of many of these home security systems is that they are really inexpensive which makes them all the more popular among the customers who want the best for their homes. One best thing about the security monitors is that the signal that the cameras pick up can be broadcasted in any of your rooms at your own convenience. Therefore, it is really important that you know what you're talking about especially with the sales people who are trying to sell you expensive security systems that you really don't require. This requires you to have some knowledge with respect to the different security systems available in the markets and the best system that would actually suit all of your home security needs. Once you have acquired the basic knowledge about home surveillance and other security systems, the rest of the process should be like a breeze for you.

In order to ensure that the quality that your security system gives you is perfect, it is important that you opt for the security systems manufactured by the same company itself. Other factors that you have to consider with respect to getting the best out of your home security surveillance systems include the lighting in your rooms, the sensitivity of the motion detectors, the resolution of the monitors, etc. Comparing the various options that are available at your disposal, you just might get your hands on the best that home security systems has to offer and that too at an affordable price.

## **Video Monitors**

Home owners are stressing too much nowadays on installing video monitors for the sake of the security of their homes. Sure, the law officials are doing everything they can to assure your

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safety but let's admit it, they're not going to look after you throughout the day, right? Therefore, it is high time that you take things into your own hands since it is about time that you realize that the safety of your home and your family solely lies in your hands. You should also understand that as seen on TV, home security systems are not only meant for the rich and famous. Although you really don't require the most expensive security systems, you will be surprised to find that many home security systems are really inexpensive and at the same time, very practical.

It is not advised that you opt for the high end, state of the art video monitor systems unless you are one of those customers who have that kind of money. For those who are under a tight budget, you'd be surprised to know that you can get the latest that the technology has to offer with respect to video monitor home security systems. Many of these systems are really cheap and very easy to install too. When deciding which video monitoring system would be the best one for you, there are certain things that you should always take into consideration. They include important factors such as opting for hidden spy cameras or the visible ones, the wired cameras or the wireless ones, whether you are opting for indoor surveillance systems or the outdoor ones and the type of recording format, i.e., recording by way of VHS tapes or by using the DVD system.

Once you have taken these factors into consideration, you need to know what each of these equipments is capable of handling. This means that you should know what are hidden cameras, visible cameras, wireless cameras, etc. All thanks to the advancement of technology, the sizes that some of these cameras come in are really amazing. Some cameras are so small that they could even fool the most experienced of all thieves. One of the best advantages of these small wonders is that they can literally be hidden in any place that you could think of. Nowadays some of the cameras also come with an additional feature of built in micro phones so that you can actually hear the conversations of the people who are being recorded by the video camera simultaneously.

Another aspect that you should know is the number of cameras that you will need for your entire house. That's because if your house is really big, you will have to invest in an ideal home security system which would not only include video cameras but also motion sensors that could actually detect the movements of the strangers and then record their activity. Developments in the field of technology have enabled video monitor home security systems to be better than ever. This advancement can be clearly seen with respect to the picture and the sound quality that the security video monitors have to offer. Therefore, these security marvels ensure the safety of your home as well as your assets when you are away on your weekend getaway or simply ensure your safety whenever you are alone at home. Once any break-in is recorded by the video surveillance system, it can easily act as evidence when it comes to nabbing the criminal and putting him to jail for good.

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Another thing that you have to remember is that investing in a video monitoring home security system should never be considered as a liability. That's because the cost of getting the system is nothing when you compare it to the loss that you may suffer due to a possible break-in. Delaying the security aspect of your house is not an option since you never know when and at what time would a crime strike.

## **The Best In House Alarm**

In the days of the past, homes were designed to protect the inhabitants. They included nifty little additions that would make intrusion by an outsider virtually impossible. Drawbridges and a moat surrounding the castle is the way men kept intruders out. Today, things are a little different, we use alarm systems that are possibly managed by companies. Installation of a quality home security system will not only increase your personal safety but will also lower the homeowner's insurance in most cases.

There are many different security systems available on the market with many different features and device that aim to protect your family, home, and possessions. Some home alarm systems are very advanced while others are simple in design and function. For example there are talking devices, video devices, key systems, and electronic number locking devices. Many of the talking devices will assist you with monitoring the status of your home when you are away with voice technology. The talking devices also help you to better understand your personal security alarm system. There are security devices available for sale that include some of the extra features that allow for the remote operation of your system, utilizing key fobs and remotes to control the alarms features. These little devices work much like the alarm systems that many vehicles are equipped with that allow the user to activate or deactivate the house alarm. Many of them are equipped with buttons that will send an alarm immediately to certain emergency response systems. This button is commonly known as a "panic button." These buttons are usually large and placed in open or clearly marked areas of the home such as the bathrooms and near the front or rear exits.

Extra protection can be ensured with the use of decals and clearly visible signs and markings which are strategically placed. They are used as a deterrent for those who wish to violate your home. All of these precautions are taken to protect you in the event that an intruder with ill will and intends to violate your privacy and well being. Studies completed worldwide indicate that homes that do not have home security devices are more likely to be burglarized than those without any protection at all. Many have tried to cut corners and post fake signs with the intention of fooling would-be intruders. Although clever, they are usually only good for lowering the odds of this happening. Why not take the full measures needed to protect your family from the worst possible scenario - a home intrusion.

There is also the worry that in the event of a power outage, a home can be left completely unprotected. This would not be a problem if you had a source of back-up power. A good home alarm system is only effective if it is operable when the main power source is not working. It is

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also important to mention that other devices such as smoke detectors and carbon monoxide poisoning monitoring devices are needed for an extra level of protection to alert authorities for any emergency that might arise. These types of devices can be linked to the home alarm systems that protect your home. Your home will be well protected and so will you and your family if you take all of the precautions necessary.

Use all of the necessary equipment such as wireless systems, keypads and monitoring services that are needed to ensure your safety. Be sure that the device is properly installed and all of the equipment is in working order. Be sure to make certain that all who need to know how to operate the alarm system are well trained in its use. All passwords, numbers, and responses to emergency response systems are needed for the operation of the home security device to work, as it should. When this is done you will be able to feel a higher level of security and the peace of mind that comes with knowing your home are secured from intruders or others that intend to harm you or your family.

## **Choosing a Home Security Company**

Thefts and burglaries seem to have become very common in this day and age and as a homeowner, if you are not equipped with what it takes to protect your home, you are as well sitting as a duck that may as well be the next target of your neighborhood cat burglar. The safety of your family, your home and its valuable assets should be given the number one priority and if you're up to the challenge of putting up a fight against these adamant thieves, then a home security system is probably the best solution that you have, or is it?

When we talk about home security systems, the first thing that comes to your mind is surveillance cameras, burglar alarms, motion detectors and other examples of what the modern day technology has to offer with respect to protecting your house. All you have to do is simply conduct a research and you will find a variety of DIY home security systems available in the online as well as the offline market places. At the same time, a thought that always comes to mind is that if you yourself can install a DIY home security system without breaking a sweat, it could be very much possible for a burglar to foil your attempts in protecting your home. The constant risk of these DIY home security systems is that you are informed about the burglary only after the event has taken place. You may as well lost thousands of dollars before you check the surveillance tapes for the robbery in your home. Therefore, in order to avoid these worst-case scenarios, it would always be advisable that you invest for a home security system that is monitored by a well-established home security company.

Trusting your home and its belongings on a reputed home security company is perhaps the best thing that you can do to assure the safety of your home. Once the security surveillance systems are installed in your home, these home security companies keep a check on your house for any

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unusual activity. This means that whenever you're not in your house and if any burglar even attempts to break into your house, the alarm is immediately tipped off, in the event of which the home security company either sends someone to check the house or they might just call the police and allow the officials to handle the matter thereon. This, however, depends on the service that you have signed up for with the home security company. This means that the home security company gives you the option of either sending in their professionally trained security staff or calling up the police in the event of any theft taking place in your house.

Another best thing about these home security companies is that they are the ones who would always be there for the maintenance of your home security systems every year or whenever the situation calls for immediate maintenance. However, one thing that you shouldn't forget that all this definitely doesn't come for free. This means that these companies charge a certain fee for their services, so get ready to shell out some dollars for the installation as well as the monthly service charges. One best thing about these home security companies is that they can greatly lower your insurance premium payments since the insurance companies often offer a discount for those houses which are more secure.

Some of the things that have to be kept in mind when availing such services of a home security company would include you to do some research about the company, i.e., how long has the company been operating, whether the company is insured or not, checking the background of the home security staff, etc. Home security companies often offer their services once the clients have signed a particular contract. Hence, it is important that you go through the contract thoroughly so that you don't find yourself opting for the expensive security add-ons, which you really don't require.

## **Monitoring Systems for Better Home Security**

It may be hard to accept but home break-ins occur every day, at anytime and anywhere. The facts are that every year approximately four million households were burglarized in the United States and close to half a million cases resulted in bodily injury and in some twenty thousand cases homicides occurred. Sometimes persons end up feeling like a prisoner in their own home, constantly worried about whether or not their home will be broken into. One way you can stop your worrying is to install sensaphone monitoring systems to keep tabs on your home. Statistics shows that homes that do not have a home security system are more than twice as likely to be broken into by a burglar when compared to a home that has a security system.

When you use a dependable security system like the sensaphone monitoring systems to keep tabs on your home, it will be a lot safer. The lives of all the persons who live in the house will be safeguarded from any potential attack from those predators who are seeking to enter to rob and do harm.

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The robbers out there have become much more sophisticated and are aware of the different home security systems that are being used by homeowners. Many will simply avoid homes with security systems while others will look for any weakness and will try to exploit it. There are a few thieves who are so skilled that they may be able to get around the home security system. It is therefore very important that you use a security system that operates as a good deterrent for the thieves.

There are many home security monitoring systems that are available, and the sensaphone monitoring systems are among the most effective ones. They can be programmed to detect the various methods used by many criminals to try and get into your home. The sensaphone monitoring systems used to keep tabs on your home can be installed fairly easily. They can also be camouflaged in the house in such a way that the criminals will never notice it at all.

The Sensaphone monitoring system is a remote monitor and alarm notification system which has features such as voice messaging, relay output that can be programmed, and phone line seizure. It is a standalone system with external inputs and protects homes by alerting owners of any change that has occurred or is occurring in vital environmental conditions. It also has the ability to monitor other conditions including temperature, power supply, alarms, humidity, and intrusion. The system monitors your home twenty four hours a day.

Once an alarm is tripped, the system will notify up to eight persons by utilizing the voice telephone calls, which will keep calling until an answer is received. The system can be set to notify security agency or the police, emergency medical technicians, ambulance, and fire department. The system also has non-volatile memory and a twenty four hour battery backup.

One of the great features of using the sensaphone monitoring systems to keep tabs on your home is that there are no monthly or yearly fees required. Thus you do not lose service or features simply because you did not pay your monthly fees. This system is ideal for those who cannot afford to pay those ever increasing monthly fee. Persons who do not want to be restricted by those systems requiring monitoring fees will find this system very useful and to their liking. Thus anyone with the system can stay almost anywhere and know what is going on in their home. If an alarm is activated they will instantly be notified and can take the appropriate action.

The system is an investment that will be well worth it in terms of the level of security it offers you and your family. It also offers you some amount of peace of mind and quietness, as you are able to sleep comfortably at nights or be away from the house for any extended period of time.

## **Do-It-Yourself Alarm Systems**

There are many alarm systems kits on the market today that you can install yourself. Most hardware stores carry these products, and distributors like Radio Shack do as well. You can also

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find do-it-yourself alarm systems and vendors on the Internet. Ordering online requires a little research on the part of the homeowner, one reason why “Alarm Forums” can prove helpful.

Installation of alarm kits is a relatively simple task of mounting and connecting a couple of wires. But be sure to follow the instructions that come with your kit. For effective and efficient use proper installation is most important. Additionally, although do-it-yourself alarm systems are economical because there are no labor fees, in some instances warranties could become voided if the system is improperly installed. Be sure to review the kits warranty before installing the product, or even purchasing it, to understand the warranties limitations.

It’s important, when shopping for your alarm system, to consider purchasing a kit that will provide technical support throughout installation and use. Most vendors found on the Internet do provide technical support services should you have difficulty with installation of their product or find your alarm system malfunctioning.

Most of the people who would install Alarm Systems by themselves would always ask this question, Should it be wireless or hard-wired?? Well, it all depends on you, what you choose is what you get and that’s what you pay for. A hard-wired alarm system is the pick if you are deciding an alarm based on the price. If security is the major concern, and you want it to be the best then once again a hard-wired alarm system would be apt! And if you want the whole DIY alarm system installation to be easy then a Wireless Alarm system would obviously be the safest bet. If you might need the best of both then a hybrid alarm system would be a good call. Signaling devices, detectors, control panel, battery or power outlet are always needed no matter what alarm system you decide to settle on.

Prior to purchasing any kind of electronic home protection device the homeowner should first consider joining an alarm forum. The Internet provides many website forums from which the homeowner can get help and advice regarding household security from security professionals and other homeowners. In these forums, the homeowner can find out which products are best suited for a particular need, tips on installation, ideas on the best location for an alarm, and much more.

For example, Home Security Store.com and forum.skype.com provide forums for homeowners to ask questions and get ideas about how to most effectively protect their home. In these forums the homeowner can also find out what systems are most economical and effective for their particular security application. In the example of Home Security Store.com, not only does this site provide a forum, but it also offers many security products. The advantage of a site like this one is that, once you find a product you are interested in, you can jump on its forum and get detailed information regarding the use and application of all their products. Qualified technicians are even available to assist you in your selections and inquiries.

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Forums on Alarm Systems are not affiliated with any Alarm manufacturers or companies neither is any technical support provided by the alarm companies. The people that give you tips, answer your queries or simply offer you assistance are volunteer members. The feedback you get from these products on Alarm Systems are unbiased opinions and should be used for reference purposes only.

The forums have plenty of information for people that would want to install Alarm Systems from understanding How Alarms Work, Design Help and How to as well. This helps in figuring out what you expect the entire setup to do and you can then purchase the equipment needed to start installing the Alarm System.

Alarm Forums are very useful and have is a good source of information for Internet users to share their knowledge when it comes to Home Alarm systems and help people all over the world.

If your neighbors on both sides have home security signs on their property and you don't, whose house do you think a thief will target? Sure, he knows that the signs may not really indicate the presence of an alarm. Sure, he's aware that many people post those signs just to discourage people like him from breaking in. He's not feeling lucky though. He's going to your house, because at least there he knows that there's no alarm standing by on a hair trigger.

Should you post security signs? It's up to you. If you have an active security system, the installers probably put up the signs for you. And, if you don't have one, you may feel a bit safer if you put up a few signs to scare off potential thieves. But have you thought about the thief who lives nearby? This is the neighborhood thief, the one you'd never suspect. He sees your neighbor come and go, always stopping to arm and disarm his security system. He sees you going in and out of your house without pausing, pulling the front door behind you as you juggle your briefcase and coffee cup. It's easy to see that there's no alarm system in place, just by his daily, casual glance.

Some people take a humorous approach to security. They put up signs like these.

"The dog's okay, but watch out for the wife!"

"Attack cat on duty!"

"Guarded by Smith and Wesson!"

Amusing as these signs are, they wouldn't stop a thief from picking that house rather than homes with authentic security stickers. The thief isn't just out for a stroll. He's looking for an unprotected home. He's in a great hurry. These signs are more likely to assure him that you're unprotected than to make him laugh out loud. If you're counting on his uncontrollable laughter to alert your watch dog, dream on! How amusing would it be to have someone enter your home and shake up your world? Victims of robberies generally report that the worst part of being robbed is the sense of invasion it engenders. Some people have trouble trying to relax and trust others after the trauma of being robbed. You can put up all the horns, speakers, lights

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and fake cameras you like and hope for the best. But what possible reason could people have for not erecting signs if they really do have an alarm system?

Unlikely as it seems, some home alarm customers prefer not to display their signs. There are three main reasons for this. First, the socially conscious alarm owner may prefer not to advertise his prosperity. He may feel guilty, on some level, about the fact that he has things worth stealing. Many people who grow up in poverty have a fixed idea that money is dirty and the rich are evil. They feel that people will either envy or despise them for what they have achieved in life. This is a deep, emotional response, and it doesn't yield easily to contrary arguments. But at least this unassuming home owner knows he is protected, even if no one else does.

The second homeowner who doesn't want security signs on his property is the one who feels that his home is his castle. He thinks this entitles him to bear arms in self-defense and in the defense of his property. He may not know that he's in danger of being labeled a vigilante if he shoots a thief who presents no physical threat to him. There are cases on record in the USA of homeowners being imprisoned for shooting thieves during robberies.

The third homeowner who doesn't erect signs is the handyman who installs the system himself. He may have bought the system second hand. In this case the original stickers are protecting the home of whoever bought it new. It's unlikely that a new system would come without stickers, but it is possible.

There are so many advantages to displaying home security signs that they far outweigh any disadvantages. It creates an illusion which can be lifesaving.

## **Protecting your Mailbox**

With the holiday season upon us many persons are receiving in the mail a lot of different offers for goods and services requiring that they to spend their money. For many persons that will be about all the mail they receive in their mailbox outside of their regular bills, until the season has passed.

In many cases when you receive mail in your mailbox your personal information is usually a part of what is sent. This is never a good situation as most mailboxes used by homeowners are easily broken into. This presents the ideal situation for identity thieves, as many of us do not even consider our mailboxes when we think about home and personal security. Every day we receive tons of mail and this is a haven for those identity thieves that will continue to be so until we address the problem.

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There are plenty of mailbox designs around but many of them have been around for over fifty years and do not stop anyone from gaining access to our mail. In fact with some mailboxes all an identity thief has to do is just reach inside the mailbox with his hand and pull out the mail. All these boxes do is to receive our mail, but they do not protect it in any way.

As homeowners many of us do not even think about how we are providing the perfect Christmas gift for identity thieves. We take our mail out of the mail box and go back inside our homes, unaware that an identity thief only needs a couple of pieces of our mail to get our personal information. They will then use it to gain and charge up credit cards to amounts we cannot afford and then we may find ourselves responsible for wrecking our credit.

It is therefore very important that as part of your over security plan for your home you include your mail box. You should take out your mail from the mailbox as soon as it arrives. If no one is available to take the mail from the mailbox you get a mail box that uses a padlock on it. You can also rent a post office box from your local post office or you can use a private mailbox service. Both offer a very secure delivery system. It will cost you a few dollars per year for rental fees.

If you decide to replace your mailbox you should choose one that is made from solid steel. Make sure that the top part of the mailbox is easily accessible by the mailman so that he can place the mail inside the box without much trouble. The section of the mailbox that you will use to access the mail should be of such that a key is required to open it. This will protect you from having your mail stolen and by extension identity theft. Mailboxes made of steel are virtually impossible to get into and does open easily when you use your key for access. It is important that you install your mailbox properly and keep it in good working condition.

You can find steel mailboxes at any hardware store both on the Internet and in your neighborhood. Take time to compare prices and the quality of the features of the mailbox, before you decide on the one you will buy.

If there is any sign of tampering you should have it immediately repaired. Also if you should see someone tampering with your mail box, you should write down their description and report it to the police or your local postmaster. Do not accost these persons by yourself, if at all; let the police handle the matter.

You must pay careful attention to your mail and your mailbox, as the identity thieves will be doing just that so protect yourself from them.

## **Constantly Staying Alert**

This is the age of information. Everyone tries to gather as much information as possible. We have twenty four hour a day newscasts, online updates, and never ending coverage of everything that happens in the world. We are constantly urged to be alert, and to notice details. TV cop shows highlight the need for surveillance and record- keeping in the solving of

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crimes. Everyone in our society receives these "Keep your eyes glued," messages. Everyone even includes criminals.

Although it's a generalization, most thieves belong in one of two categories; some thieves are driven by their addictions; some are driven by a sense of superiority to everyone else. An addict is trying to feed his addictions while the other is trying to feed his own desire to outwit others. He's the con man, the trickster, the smooth talker. This fellow can rob you blind, lying right to your face and stringing you along. He's not the guy that will steal your toaster.

The addict is a desperate person. He's sizing up your property to see if he can rush in, grab something quickly, and then make a clean getaway. He's looking for a way to avoid detection by nosy neighbors, passersby, and casual observers. The best way that a thief can avoid attracting unwanted attention is by finding an entrance that is not easily seen. Some homeowners make this easy by growing shrubs or dense trees right in front of their windows. All that he has to do is get quickly behind the foliage and start working on the window. If he finds a house that has been built in a way that windows or doors can't be seen by neighbors or passersby, in he'll go. And out he'll come, carrying away your TV and your peace of mind.

Another easy mode of home entry is through back laneways. Many homes were built long ago, at a time when driveways were not automatically part of the planning. Many of these homes have a rear entrance with a garage added. Not only can he sneak off with the contents of your garage, but he can also examine your house at leisure to find the best back entrance. As long as no one sees him acting surreptitiously on your property, chances are he'll get away with the theft.

There are two things that even a strung out junkie will avoid, if possible. He'd rather not deal with dogs. Whether it is a tiny yappy lap dog, or a slavering Pit Bull who hasn't been fed lately, dogs cause trouble for thieves. They'll bark and run around excitedly getting their owners' attention and clearly showing the general area where the intruder is hiding. And that's if he doesn't get a hold of the thief. If he does, all of his territorial instincts will kick in and heaven help the thief. Some dog owners claim that they're not liable for any damage done to the criminal, providing they have posted a sign clearly stating "Beware of Dog." Others say that if you post such a sign you're admitting that you have a dangerous animal on the property. This admission may lead to charges that you failed to protect the thief from your big wild dog. Some people avoid the whole issue by erecting signs and organizing a sound track of barking.

The second thing that thieves dislike when looking at a potentially easy home entry, is firearms, or evidence of them. Stickers on the windows, which alert the robber to your membership in the National Rifle Association, may deter him from attempting entry. However, firearms are valuable, and are easily sold in the shady underworld where the habitual thief spends his time and money. If he thinks it's worth the effort, he may watch this house very carefully over the

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next few days. Then, when he's sure that everyone has left the residence he may be brave enough to go in for the firearms.

You may think that the common thief is a dying breed in this high tech, information age. But because he's a desperate person with a powerful need for money, a determined thief can still get into your house unless you try to look at your house through his eyes. Then you must take steps to keep him out.

## **Ways To Discourage A Criminal**

Wonderful! You're going away on vacation. You've worked hard, and you deserve a break. Make sure you don't get a "Break and Enter, "as well.

Here are fifteen tips to help ensure that when you return from vacation, your home and possessions will be as you left them. If you follow some of these suggestions, you'll enjoy your holiday more, because you'll know you've taken ample precautions. The only thing that you'll worry about will be whether you left the iron or the stove on, by mistake. There is no cure for that worry!

1. Put your mail on hold. There's nothing that says "Nobody's home," like an overflowing mailbox or a pile of mail on the floor under your door's letterbox. Do this early enough to allow the post office to get the information to your letter carrier. Just to be sure, do it three or four days before you leave.
2. By the same token, put your newspaper delivery on hold. A pile of unread newspapers is as clear as a neon sign saying, "Vacant," to the thief.
3. Get a timer for your lights. They're not expensive, and they give the illusion that someone's at home.
4. Leave some music playing, or put the TV on a twenty four hour talk channel. Anyone approaching your premises will hear it and assume someone is there.
5. Never put a message on your answering machine which states, "We're not home right now...," because if a well-organized thief is calling to see if anyone's home he'll know that the coast is clear. You might as well put on a message saying, "Come right in."
6. A debate about whether to leave your drapes open or closed when you're on vacation has raged on for years. You have to decide what's best for you, taking into account what's visible from outside your windows. Some fence-sitters in this debate leave some drapes closed and some open.

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7. Another debate surrounds whether or not you should leave your car in the driveway. Many people feel that an observant thief will notice a car that never moves. Others think that a car on the property will convince a thief that there's someone home.
8. Padlock all gates which lead to your back yard. A thief won't relish the idea of trying to get back over the gate while carrying your video player and gun collection.
9. Get someone trustworthy to go to your home regularly to move the curtains, water your plants and do whatever yard work needs to be done. It's unlikely that your trustworthy friend will have a home-wrecking party as always happens in the movies.
10. Give a contact number to a neighbor or friend. This is for emergencies only.
11. It may seem obvious, but double check that all the doors and windows are locked.
12. If you have an alarm system, call the security company and let them know that you're leaving and if someone's taking care of your property, inform that too. Suggest that they send a representative to drive by your place every couple of days. (Not at a regular time, and not too slowly or obviously.)
13. Let the cops of the locality know your travel plans. As with the security company, they could drive by occasionally, as long as it's not too obvious.
14. Get a floor safe and store your valuables there. If installed properly, it should be undetectable.
15. Consider hiring a house-sitter. Having a dependable person living in your home may be your best insurance against being a robbery victim.

It may sound more complicated than a military exercise, but remember that you can start on your preparations well in advance of going away. Remember, it will all be worth it when you see your property retreat in your rear view mirror, secure in the knowledge that you've done everything in your power to protect your home and belongings from criminal attack.

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