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Doors are Your First Line of Defence in Home Security

Protect against break-ins with a security check that shows where the entrances to your house your doors are vulnerable.



Your deadbolt should throw at least a 20mm bolt. Grade 1 deadbolts are the most secure options.

The easiest way for an intruder to get into your house is by coming through the door. All of your efforts to protect your home, including an electronic home security system, are useless if your doors aren't secure. Before you invest in an alarm system, conduct your own home security check of the entry points to your house.

Think like a burglar

First, stand back: is your front door visible from the street, or is it obscured by bushes? A door that's covered by shrubbery offers thieves the perfect chance to break in without being seen. So trim back or remove shrubbery that offers cover for potential intruders.

Upgrade strike plates and deadbolts

Open all doors and check the strike plates, the metal fittings that catch bolts and latches. Chances are, they're fastened to the soft wood of the door jamb with two screws only. Not good. Upgrade security with four-screw strike plates (\$3) and 3-inch screws that bite all the way into the stud behind the jamb.

Check garage doors

Back doors and garage doors are more likely to be attacked than the front door. If you have an attached garage, disable the automatic opener and lock the garage door before you go away on a long trip. The door leading from the garage into the house should be outfitted with the same hardware as exterior doors and kept locked at all times.

Patio doors are vulnerable

Sliding doors leading to a patio can be a home's weak spot. To beef up security:

- Closely inspect the doors and their hardware.
- Replace any missing or broken locks.
- Consider installing locking pins to prevent the doors from sliding.
- Get into the habit of locking the doors, not just the screen, when patio doors are unattended.

Replace your entry door

Check the construction of your entry doors. Those made of steel, solid wood, and impact-resistant fiberglass are all good choices for security. If you must have glass, make sure it is tempered or reinforced for added strength.

Strengthen the lock on your outdoor storage shed

Don't ignore the doors on your outdoor storage shed, especially if you store tools there; they could be useful to a burglar. As with house doors, the best option is a secure deadbolt. If your shed doors are unable to accommodate a deadbolt, a heavy-duty slide bolt (\$15 to \$25) secured by a padlock is a good substitute.

To find out more and get your home inspected call your local independent property inspector on **1800 17 88 22** or email info@ipi.net.au

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