

# A PRACTICAL \* GUIDE TO HOME SECURITY

This guide provides basic information about securing your rented premises from intrusion. Although some expenses may be involved, you will soon see they are minimal, as well as a great investment (you're worth it!). Landlords often will pay for reasonable security improvements, or they may agree to share costs and/or install locks, latches, or security lighting which you offer to help purchase. Try bargaining with your landlord for whatever security improvements you feel are important. Always obtain your landlord's approval before making changes to the premises you are leasing.

Locked doors and windows cannot stop someone determined to enter a home. But good locks, window stops, and adequate lighting can make breaking and entering a noisy and obvious operation, and can delay entry long enough for occupants to summon help. Most perpetrators are deterred from entering property when entry requires excessive disturbance or effort. They know that in the time it takes them to successfully by - pass locks, neighbors or house occupants can call 911 and have helped dispatched to the scene.

Following the suggestions in this handout will not guarantee 100% security of your houses, apartments, or the property in them. However, implementing these suggestions will provide a reasonable response to the security needs of the average renter or homeowner.

## ENTRANCE DOOR LOCKS

A dead bolt lock is recommended for all entrance doors. Dead bolts are less likely than conventional locks to yield if someone tries to force entrance. Doors which automatically lock when closed are not dead bolt locks; a dead bolt is a 1" to 2" metal bar which extends from the door into the door frame. Dead bolts are usually activated by a knob on the door (interior) or by a key (exterior).

Locks and security fixtures for use on entrance doors are listed below. Unless otherwise noted, installation of these security devices requires only normal household tools: hammer, screwdrivers, and pliers. Suppliers of hardware, tools, and equipment rental are noted at the end of this handout.

ITEM	COST	COMMENTS
Deadlock with Jimmy - proof plates	\$10	2" dead bolt preferred over 1". Requires drilling, special bits, screwdriver for installation.
High security strike	\$12 - \$18	

\*Practical = easy, cheap, and quick.

## EXTERIOR BASEMENT ENTRANCES AND HATCH DOORS

Forced entry to houses is commonly made through the basement or cellar. Windows and entrances to non-habitable basements are often remote to traffic, or are blocked from view by landscaping. Also, the noise caused by breaking into a basement is seldom heard by residents living on upper floors, so the chances of detection are reduced.

Basement windows can be easily kicked in. Police recommend a horizontal steel bar be installed across non-habitable basement windows so that, even if the pane is broken, there is not sufficient room for entry. Quality dead bolts or steel hatch doors with tumbler locks and bolts are recommended on doors entering basements. However, all of these measures are expensive, and so may not be suitable for rented premises.

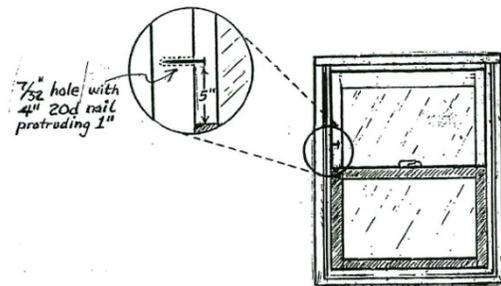
An alternate solution is to secure basement windows with nails or screws, and to install surface dead bolts on basement doors, then to concentrate security efforts on the inside door leading from the basement or cellar into the first level of the house. This door may be treated as an ENTRANCE DOOR, and secured as recommended above.

ITEM	COST	COMMENTS
Keyed indoor/outdoor hasp lock	\$7	Easily installed, particularly suitable for wooden basement entrances and hatch doors.
Branch pruner	\$6 - \$15	For pruning of landscaping which obscures basement windows. Available at the Rental Center.

## WINDOWS

Window should have sash locks secured when they are closed. Windows which must be opened for ventilation and which are accessible from the ground, porch roofs, etc., should be secured with a ventilation window lock or pin.

The simplest way to allow ventilation with the safety is to install stops which allow sash windows to open, but not more than 5". Drilling a 7/32" hole, and inserting a 4" long, 20 penny nail 5" above the top of the lower frame will serve this purpose. Hardware stores sell ventilating window locks which snap out of the way (from the interior, only) to allow convenient full opening of the window. Suppliers of hardware, tools, and equipment rental are noted at the end of this handout.



ITEM	COST	COMMENTS
Ventilating window lock	\$4	Allows occasional full opening of window without removal of screw or pin. Cost is only disadvantage.
20d common nails, 4" long	\$2/lb.	20d (read as "twenty penny") nails come approximately 30 per pound, are sufficient for the windows in most homes or apartments. A 7/32" drill bit should be used for this size nail.
Sash lock	\$4	For locking window when fully closed.

### SAFETY LATCHES AND CHAINS

In addition to locks which allow entry by key, safety latches or chains may be installed for additional security or privacy. The latch or safety chain is activated by the resident when inside the house. Latches, chains, and similar items which secure doors are especially useful for inside doors leading to bedrooms.

ITEM	COST	COMMENTS
Chair door guard and bolt	\$4	Pre - drilling holes is suggested. The purchase of supplementary, longer screws may increase holding power in the event of attempted forced entry.
Standard door chain	\$3	See above.
Sliding door/window lock	\$3	See above.
Patio Door pin lock	\$3	See above.
U - Bolt - It lock	\$6	Metal U - shape latch bar, more difficult to cut than chain.
Jammer	\$15 - \$20	Bar which wedges between doorknob and floor. Extremely strong (doorknob or floor would have to yield in order to allow entry). Available at the Trevor True Value Hardware, Moline.

### ALARMS

There are a number of alarm devices which sense noise, body heat, or movement, then emit a loud local alarm to warn occupants of an intruder. False alarms can be frequent with some alarm systems; sensors may malfunction or react to stimuli other than an intruder (for example: pets, other renters, heat blowing from a furnace duct, movement of curtains caused by drafts, inadvertent noise, etc.). Generally, good security at entry points (windows and doors) will serve the same purpose as an alarm, i.e. cause intruders to make sufficient noise to alert occupants or neighbors.

ITEM	COST	COMMENTS
Sound/body heat activated indoor light controls	\$20 - \$30	Available at True Value Hardware.
Intruder alarm system	\$35 - \$60	Available at True Value Hardware.

## EXTERIOR LIGHTING

Utilizing existing light fixtures, you may install high wattage flood lamps or incandescent bulbs (within limits allowed for fixture type). Existing outlets can be replaced by floodlight receptacles, then floodlights used where incandescent bulbs were previously installed.

Landlords should be asked to provide adequate lighting for all exterior portions of rented premises. Additionally, landscaping which obscures light fixtures or which blocks light from walkways and locations near entrances and windows should be cut back or removed. Be sure to obtain your landlord's permission before trimming hedges or trees.

ITEM	COST	COMMENTS
Sensor floodlight	\$20 - \$50	Widely available. Can be adjusted to different sensitivity levels, will tune on exterior lighting automatically when activated by body heat or motion.

## OTHER SUGGESTIONS

Keep doors and windows in repair, with particular attention given to locks and latching devices. Control access for keys, and be certain renters with whom you share your unit always keep doors locked, and keys secure. Never hide a spare key where others might obtain access. Always have your key out and ready to use when you approach your entrance door (in order not to delay entry). If your entry door does not have a window to allow observation of the entry area, install a wide view door peep so you can easily identify person seeking entrance. Install a quality latch or similar device on your bedroom door, and always use it when sleeping.

***An extension phone or cell phone in the room where you sleep provides an additional level of security. As long as you install telephone extensions yourself, there is no service charge or user fee. Extension wire, jacks, and inexpensive extension telephones (with installation instructions) are available at most discount department stores.***

Do not keep highly valuable items or large amounts of cash in your home or apartment. Instead, use a safe deposit box for storage. Draw curtains, use shades, and close venetian blinds in the evening so persons cannot easily see into the house. When absent from the rental property at night, leave several lights on. You may also wish to have a lamp on a timer so the lamp will turn on and off to simulate your presence.

Telephones should be readily accessible, with receiver installed in or near sleeping areas. If calling for assistance, dial 911 and provide basic information about your emergency. Dispatchers will ask for whatever additional information is needed to provide assistance. If you are unable to stay at the phone receiver, dial 911, and then leave for a safe, nearby location.

Enhanced 911 service will provide emergency personnel with your house address, and a police car will be dispatched even if you have not spoken a word into the telephone receiver.

ITEM	COST	COMMENTS
Branch pruner	\$6 - \$15	Available at any hardware store. Suggest you ask landlord to remove growth needing pruning
Electric drill w/bits	\$7 for 4 hours rental	Available at A - 1 Rental Center
Timer switch for lamps	\$8 - \$35	A wide variety available. More expensive models randomly turn lights on and off so lighting patterns make property appear occupied.
Door peep	\$4 - \$8	160 - 180 degree view hole with lens. Requires drill to install.
50', 4 - conductor telephone wire	\$6	For extension phone.
Telephone jack	\$4	Same as above.
25' extension cord w/jack attached	\$8	Same as above.
Telephones	\$25 up	Cordless phones start as low as \$60, and can often be used throughout smaller homes and apartments without adding wiring or telephone jacks.

### NEARBY SUPPLIERS

Handy True Value Hardware  
1435 30<sup>th</sup> St  
Rock Island  
788 - 2330

Trevor True Value Hardwar  
2842 16<sup>th</sup> Street  
Moline  
764 - 5689

M and M Hardware  
3805 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Rock Island  
788 - 6612

Hilltop Ace Hardware  
1880 38<sup>th</sup> Street  
Rock Island  
786 - 0893

Menards  
4100 10<sup>th</sup> Street Drive  
Moline  
762 - 4618