



# Ensure your home is secure whilst on holiday



Going on holiday is an exciting time and something that we are all looking forward to given the pandemic that has restricted our movements over the past year.

With the vaccine rollout currently taking place across the UK, there is hope that over the coming months we can once again look forward to travelling and holidays - and whilst we still may not be able to travel abroad, a holiday in the UK will still be an equally pleasant proposition.

However, before going away on holiday you need to think about the security of your home, as returning home from a holiday to find out that your home has been burgled would be both upsetting and stressful.

## Follow the advice below from Secured by Design to help keep your home safe while you're away

- Ensure doors and windows are in a good state of repair and that good quality locks or bolts are fitted to all outside doors
- Ensure the locks on all windows and doors are in good working order and are locked. Any broken or defective locks should be repaired by a Locksmith registered with the Master Locksmiths Association [www.locksmiths.co.uk](http://www.locksmiths.co.uk)
- Remove the keys from all windows and doors and put them in a safe place when you leave the house
- If you have an intruder alarm, make sure it's set. If you don't have one consider having an approved alarm system installed. Visit [www.policesecuritysystems.com/choose-an-alarm](http://www.policesecuritysystems.com/choose-an-alarm) to find out all the information that you need to know to assist you in choosing the right security system for your home or business
- Make use of timer plugs with lamps and radios to make your house seem occupied. You can also get photosensitive bulbs, which are activated when it gets darker
- Don't leave valuable items such as laptops and jewellery in view of windows. Lock valuable items away in a ground anchored safe or you could consider leaving important documents and valuable items with other family members whilst away



Most burglars are opportunists, with their motive in the main being to get into a property as quickly as possible, steal something of value and then leave as quickly as possible. A secure home will therefore be a deterrent to them and reduces the chance of you becoming a victim of a burglary.

**Alfie Hosker**, Technical Manager at Secured by Design, the official police security initiative

## And don't forget the outside of your home too

It is important that your home does not appear unoccupied whilst you are away, so consider cutting the lawn and hedges before you leave, so that it doesn't look unkempt.

### Also:

- Make sure all access points are secured such as gates and activate any external security lighting that you may have
- Ensure gardening equipment, tools and ladders are put away and securely stored. Don't leave them lying around in your garden as they could aid burglars
- Ensure that any sheds and out buildings are locked and secured. Use good quality locks on garages and sheds (ensure screws on latches and hinges cannot be undone easily from the outside) and where possible ensure that they are alarmed
- Mark your valuables such as jewellery and electronic equipment, including your gardening equipment, tools and other valuables stored in sheds and garages, using a Secured by Design approved property marking solution
- Cancel milk and newspaper deliveries if you have them. Don't announce your departure to a shop full of people. Only tell people who need to know you're going away such as a trusted friend or neighbour
- Ask a trusted neighbour or friend to collect post, open and close curtains
- Never post statuses or comment on social media about going on holiday – or indeed whilst you are away on holiday. You wouldn't display a sign in your window advertising that you're going on holiday, so don't advertise it online - if you must post status updates, ensure that your privacy settings are set so that only trusted family and friends can view the updates
- Is there a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme where you live? Visit [www.ourwatch.org.uk](http://www.ourwatch.org.uk) and enter your postcode to check to see if there are any schemes declared in your area, or alternatively speak with your local Neighbourhood Policing Team
- Make sure that you have up-to-date contents and buildings insurance – and remember, most insurance policies only cover burglary claims on an unoccupied home if there are signs of forced entry, so double check all doors and windows are closed and locked
- Finally, just before you actually set off it's worth allowing a quiet couple of minutes on the doorstep to check you've done all you had to do and taken everything you need with you



Secured by Design operate an accreditation scheme on behalf of the UK Police Service for products or services that have met recognised security standards. This includes perimeter security products, vehicle security, bicycle and motorcycle security, asset marking, CCTV, alarms, locks & hardware, doors, windows, external storage and many others. Secured by Design focuses is on the critical factors that combine to deliver a product's performance – design, use, quality control and the ability to deter or prevent crime – and these products or services are known as being of a 'Police Preferred Specification'.

**The Secured by Design website contains details of the many hundreds of companies who produce over 7000 individual attack resistant crime prevention products in more than 30 different categories that have met these exacting Police Preferred Specification requirements.**

**[www.securedbydesign.com](http://www.securedbydesign.com)**