



How to Conduct a Security Audit for your Property

It is easy to say, “Think like a bad guy and look at your windows”. It is hard to do. You just do not think like a bad guy. What you should be thinking is, “Where are the weak entry points to my house”. Try this approach. Look at your property and look for signs of wear, locks that are not locked, glass that is cracked and window and door frames that are not secure. If you correct the little things, you can increase your security.

Develop a checklist:

Lighting

- Where are the dark areas that could hide a bad guy? Lights that are motion activated are inexpensive and can be battery powered.

Door locks

- Sliding glass doors can be locked by placing a broom handle in the track to prevent movement.
- Exterior doors should be mounted using 3” screws into the door frame. Most are not mounted that way, but replacing the screws with longer ones is easy to do and will make the door much harder to knock off the frame.
- Exterior door locks and striker plates for deadbolts should also be mounted with 3” screws for the same reason.

Windows close to the entry door

- Security film is available that keeps glass from shattering. Consider installing security film on the inside of the glass. This will allow you to still look out of the window, but if an effort is made to break the glass, it will break, but remain in the frame with the pieces held together by the film.

Other windows

- Examine the locks and how the pieces align. Do they really lock? Can the lock be seen from the exterior of the property? Visible locks can be both a good and a bad thing. Visible locks identify the point that must be breeched and can focus the attention of the bad guy or it can dissuade them. Invisible locks can be frustrating. A guy intent on fast entry and exit may move on if the locks slow or block entry. Do you have any locks that you forget to lock on windows?

Keys

- Do you have a spare key to your property? Many of us do. You can invest in the plastic rock that has a compartment for a key. The problem with this is that it is really obvious. Look around and think where a good hiding place might be. This is critical. If it is easy for you to think of, it is easy for a bad guy to think of.
- Consider having a hiding place for your key in front of your neighbor's house. Remember to tell them and offer for them to hide a key in front of your property.
- Change locks and keys fairly often. Every few years at least. When you move into a property, change the locks as you move in. You do not know who has copies of the old keys. Technology has changed and locks are getting better. Let it work for you.
- Keyless entry locks are great as long as you remember to change batteries or remember the code. Punching the code while juggling groceries on a cold night can be a pain.

Plants

- Consider planting security plants. Let nature guard your property. Planting cactus or other spiny plants make it difficult for bad guys to observe you through the window. My favorite is the Pyracantha bush. I never want to be the one trimming the bush because it sports long thorns that bite, snag and cause you to say nasty things.

Remember: little things such as light or thorny plants can make you safer!

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