



BURGLARY PREVENTION ADVICE



Keep burglars out of your property

Burglars will use a variety of ways to avoid being noticed.

They don't want to be seen or heard by a neighbour or passer-by because they will feel exposed and identifiable.

Distraction burglars will pretend to be someone they are not, so it's important you are aware of the common methods they will use to get you to let them into your property.

Here's some useful advice, firstly on helping to keep burglars out by giving them no hiding place and, secondly, on how to prevent a distraction burglary.

Keep it visible

You'd think that it would be best to make a property less visible from the street, and to keep it hidden from prying eyes behind overgrown bushes, trees, high fences or walls. In reality, all that this serves to do is make it easier for a burglar to get close to a home unnoticed, and provide somewhere to hide while carrying out a burglary or theft from the property.

1. Lower fences at the front around one-metre high are preferable to high fences as they allow for a clear view over the top and don't provide cover for anyone wishing to hide.
2. At the rear and sides, taller fencing is recommended to prevent easy access.
3. Trellis, thorny plants, or a suitable anti-climb topping such as plastic spikes make it difficult for anyone climbing over a fence or gate.
4. Planting prickly or barbed shrubbery along boundaries and fence lines acts as an effective natural barrier.
5. Gravel driveways and paths will make sure you hear anyone approach.

Other ways to make it difficult for burglars

CCTV
Alarms
Lighting

Distraction burglary

Distraction burglars pretend to be someone they are not in order to gain entry to your home.

Common methods used by distraction burglars

- pretending to be from a care agency, the council or a utility company investigating a gas or water leak
- seeking help to leave a note for a neighbour or even asking for a drink of water if they claim to be thirsty or unwell
- claiming to be in a hurry or emergency and needing to get into your home quickly
- working in teams, with one person distracting you while the other searches your home

How to prevent it

There are a number of things you can do to prevent distraction burglary. Don't be afraid to ask questions about anyone at your door – genuine callers won't mind. Always remember 'if in doubt, keep them out':

- use your door viewer to see who's there
- if you open the door put the chain on first
- always ask for ID and check it with the company before letting somebody into your home
- use the phone number advertised in the phone book or online, as the number on their identity card could be fake. For a utility company, call the customer service department. Close the door while you do this
- if you feel at all unsure, schedule a time for the caller to come back when a friend or relative is there
- for pre-planned appointments with utility companies, a password scheme can be set up

If you feel threatened or in danger by the presence of the caller, call [999](#).

