

Increasingly, businesses are allowing their employees to telecommute and entrepreneurs are running businesses from their homes. Offices are standard in many homes today and are equipped with the latest in computers, scanners, printers, faxes, and other expensive equipment. Remember, it is important to secure yourself and your equipment when you're working from home.



# **WORKING SAFELY AT HOME**

- ▶ Install solid doors and good deadbolt locks on all exterior doors—and use them.
- ▶ Hang window treatments that obstruct the view into your office. You don't want to advertise what equipment you have.
- ▶ Consider installing motion-sensored lighting that will come on if someone is walking around your yard.
- ▶ Keep bushes and trees trimmed so that you can see into your yard and neighbors can see your house.
- ▶ Install a wide-angle viewer in the door of your home office if it is detached from the main house.
- ▶ Look into an alarm system. A basic system can be purchased for less than \$100, plus a monthly monitoring fee.
- ▶ Keep a cellular phone handy.
- ▶ When meeting a client for the first time, arrange to meet in a public place, such as a coffee shop or the library—not your home.
- ▶ Let someone know when and with whom you have appointments.
- ▶ Review your insurance policy—almost all policies require an extra rider to cover a home office. In the event something does happen, you want to be covered.
- ▶ Mark your equipment with identification numbers and keep an updated inventory list (with photos, if possible) in a home safe or a bank safe deposit box. It's a good idea to keep back-ups of your work in a secure, separate location as well.
- ▶ Use the same caution with deliveries as businesses do. Anyone making a delivery to your home office should be properly identified before you open the door. Do not let the person enter your home.



**National Crime Prevention Council**

1000 Connecticut Avenue, NW • 13th Floor • Washington, DC 20036 • [www.ncpc.org](http://www.ncpc.org)

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### HOME SECURITY CHECKLIST

Use this as a guide as you check your home for safety measures. Boxes marked "no" indicate areas where you could take action to improve your home's security. These are just some of the steps you can take to decrease the likelihood that your home is targeted.

#### YES NO Exterior Doors

- All doors are locked at night and every time we leave the house—even if it's just for a few minutes.
- Doors are solid hardwood or metal-clad.
- Doors feature wide-angle viewers at heights everyone can use.
- If there are glass panels in or near our doors, they are reinforced in some way so that they cannot be shattered.
- All entryways have a working, keyed entry lock and sturdy deadbolt lock installed into the frame of the door.
- Spare keys are kept with a trusted neighbor, not under a doormat or planter, on a ledge, or in the mailbox.

#### YES NO Garage and Sliding Door Security

- The door leading from the attached garage to the house is solid wood or metal-clad and protected with a quality keyed door lock and deadbolt.
- The overhead garage door has a lock so that we do not rely solely on the automatic door opener to provide security.
- Garage doors are all locked when leaving the house.
- The sliding glass door has a strong, working key locks.
- A dowel or a pin has been installed to prevent the door from being shoved aside or lifted off the track.
- The sliding door is locked every night and each time we leave the house.

#### YES NO Protecting Windows

- Every window in the house has a working key lock or is securely pinned.
- Windows are always locked, even when they are opened a few inches for ventilation.

#### YES NO Outdoor Security

- Shrubs and bushes are trimmed so there is no place for someone to hide.
- There are no dark areas around our house, garage, or yard at night that would hide prowlers.
- Every outside door has a motion-sensored, bright, working light to illuminate visitors.
- Motion-sensored floodlights are used appropriately to ensure effective illumination.
- Our house number is clearly displayed so police and other emergency vehicles can find the house quickly.

#### YES NO Security When Away From Home

- At least two light timers have been set to turn the lights on and off in a logical sequence when we are away from home for an extended time period.
- The motion detector or other alarm system (if we have one) has been activated when we leave home.
- Mail and newspaper deliveries have been stopped or arrangements for a neighbor/friend to pick them up have been made when we go away from home for a period of time.
- A neighbor has been asked to tend the yard and watch our home when we are away.

#### YES NO Outdoor Valuables and Personal Property

- Gate latches, garage doors, and shed doors are all locked with high-security, laminated padlocks.
- Gate latches, garage doors, and shed doors are locked after every use.
- Grills, lawn mowers, and other valuables are stored in a locked garage or shed, or if left out in the open, are hidden from view with a tarp and securely locked to a stationary point.
- Every bicycle is secured with a U-bar lock or quality padlock and chain.
- Bikes are always locked, even if we leave them for just a minute.
- Firearms are stored unloaded and locked in storage boxes and secured with trigger guard locks.
- Valuable items, such as televisions, stereos, and computers have been inscribed with an identifying number approved by local police.
- Our home inventory is up-to-date and includes pictures. A complete copy is kept somewhere out of the house.