

# HOME SECURITY CHALLENGE

**How secure is your home? Probably not as secure as it could be.**

That's why Neighbourhood Watch and Hampshire Constabulary are joining forces to help you improve your home safety and reduce the chances of becoming a victim of burglary.



**Find out how secure your home is and take our Home Security Challenge.**

Simply answer the questions below to identify how secure your home is. Where your home falls short in the security stakes, consider how you can rectify this to help protect your property and keep crime down.

## STEP 1: APPROACHING THE OUTSIDE OF YOUR PROPERTY

**Q.1** Does the exterior of your property need lighting for neighbours to view those accessing your property?

YES  NO

If no, consider installing external dusk to dawn lighting or low level feature lighting.

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**Q.2** Does your property have 'defensive' (thorny/dense) planting under windows to prevent access to them?

YES  NO

If no, consider planting plants with a defensive nature for example, thorny bushes, roses, pyracanthus.

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**Q.3** Is the back of your property boundary enclosed with a fence?

YES  NO

If yes, putting trellis all the way around including over gates can prevent unwanted access. Using trellis means you do not have to apply for permission to extend above the usual 1.8 metres.

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**Q.4** If you are part of a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme is your window sticker visible?

YES  NO

If no, please contact your local NW co-ordinator or police officer for advice.

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**Q.5** Do you have a notice at the front of your property (window/door) asking cold callers not to call?

YES  NO

If no, please contact your local Trading Standards team or local NW co-ordinator for advice.

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**SUMMARY:** The main aim of this section is to ensure that your home looks 'lived in' at all times. By removing obvious clues to your absence this will make an opportunistic burglar consider another option. An active Neighbourhood Watch can help greatly to encourage neighbourliness and deter crime.

Letterboxes are a tricky area to protect, simple measures can be taken to reduce accessing the front door, and for example, a good quality external mail box could be fitted to the property in lieu of a letterbox. Mailguard™ which is a bag type product fitted internally onto your letterbox to capture the mail.

**For more information on Neighbourhood Watch visit [www.hinwa-nh.org.uk](http://www.hinwa-nh.org.uk)**

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## STEP 2: YOUR HOME (DOORS, WINDOWS AND LOCKS)

**Q.6** How safe is your front and back door: does it feel secure and is the frame in good condition?

YES  NO

If no, visit [www.securedbydesign.co.uk](http://www.securedbydesign.co.uk) and look for the approved kite marked product and/or visit [www.soldsecure.com](http://www.soldsecure.com).

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**Q.7** Are your doors wooden and fitted with a 5 lever mortice lock which you always use?

YES  NO

If yes, continue to use the lock. If no, consider installing an approved 5 lever mortice lock, or an extra lock such as a rim lock.

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**Q.8** Do you have UVPC doors?

YES  NO

If yes, ensure that you lock the doors correctly by lifting the handle AND using the key. Simply lifting the handle only does not fully protect you.

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**Q.9** Do you have patio doors?

YES  NO

If yes, please check the following: Is it externally hung? Can it be lifted from its frame?

YES  NO

If yes, place a piece of wood between the top frame and the opening door to prevent lift. Consider adding locks internally to prevent the door from being slid or lifted.

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**Q.10** Are your windows fitted with lock?

YES  NO

If no, have a registered locksmith from the Master Locksmith Association ([www.locksmiths.co.uk](http://www.locksmiths.co.uk)) either fit or advise on the relevant locks for your specific windows.

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**Q.11** Do you have an integral garage door?

YES  NO

If yes, always lock this door and treat it as an external door using an appropriate BS 5 lever mortice lock.

# HOME SECURITY CHALLENGE

## STEP 3: INSIDE YOUR HOME

**Q.12** Do you use timer switches on lamps, radios/televisions and window alarms when you are away from your property?

YES  NO

If yes, please encourage family, friends and colleagues to buy them - but do not advertise the fact that you use them. If no, purchase from local shops and DIY suppliers, use regularly both upstairs and downstairs whether you are in or out.

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**Q.13** Have you properly marked your general property with your postcode and house number?

YES  NO

If yes, please tell others to do the same. If no, UV mark electricals, tools, CD's, DVD's, laptops, cameras etc. with your house number and postcode. Take photos and register your items for FREE at [www.immobilise.com](http://www.immobilise.com)

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**Q.14** Do you own jewellery?

YES  NO

If yes, and they are valuable items ask advice from a registered jeweller for registration and photographing for insurance purposes, and register for FREE on [www.immobilise.com](http://www.immobilise.com). If yes, but not so valuable, photograph your items, keep a record and store securely.

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**Q.15** Do you have antiques?

YES  NO

If yes, seek advice from a registered antique dealer as to the best way of property marking that particular item. This could be with a forensic marking solution which has a unique code.

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**Q.16** Do you leave your keys on view and easily accessible to others?

YES  NO

If yes, please do not do this. Place your house and car keys in a safe place out of view, ensure that the whole family is aware of and where they can be accessed in an emergency.

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**SUMMARY:** The main aim of this section is to highlight that a few simple precautions may help to move an opportunistic burglar away from your home.

- Try not to leave keys in doors
- Make sure you check fire escape routes after you have put your new security measures in place to make certain that everyone who resides in the house is made aware of procedures, you can check with the Hampshire Fire & Rescue Service.
- Ask your Insurance Company for an insurance advice check too.
- 'Beware of the dog' signs can be useful in deterring a burglar.
- Regarding fitting locks etc. please ensure that with any changes you consult with the manufacturer to ensure guarantees are upheld.
- Visit [www.locksmiths.co.uk](http://www.locksmiths.co.uk) to find a registered Master Locksmith in your area.

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# HOME SECURITY CHALLENGE

## STEP 4: GARDEN, GARAGES, SHEDS AND HEDGES

**Q.17** Do you have a garden?

YES  NO

If yes, are wooden garden gates secured centrally with a hasp and closed shackle lock fitted with non-returnable screws.

Is the fence in good condition? Are your metal gates secured with a chain and closed shackle lock? Are bins or rubbish containers secured to a wall away from enabling someone to use them to gain access to your garden? If not think of securing them or move them to a different site.

**Q.18** Do you have a garage?

YES  NO

If yes, ensure a suitable lock is fitted and a shed alarm or similar installed. You can use an anchor point to secure motorbikes/mopeds.

**Q.19** Do you have a garden shed?

YES  NO

If yes, ensure it is fitted with a hasp and closed shackled lock and non returnable screws. Also install a shed alarm or similar. Consider using an external remote dusk to dawn light. Consider pea shingle around the shed which will make a noise when walked upon.

**Q.20** Is your property surrounded by hedging?

YES  NO

If yes, consider trimming it back to 'chest height' or lower so that you have good visibility – this also means that a burglar trying to gain entry to the front of your property can be seen from the street. High hedges provide cover for burglars.

**SUMMARY:** The aim of this section is to make homeowners think of their extra areas and items. If you have valuable pots/planters or ornaments in your garden, make sure they are property marked, if you have tools in your garden shed or garage then make sure you have the manufacturers codes and details for each item and property mark each item with your house number and postcode, and register these items for FREE on [www.immobilise.com](http://www.immobilise.com).

If you have a ladder that is too big for your shed or garage use a ladder holder which secures the ladder to the property thereby stopping people gaining access to it.

Remember hedging is very nice for privacy but could also stop your neighbours and passers-by seeing anyone suspicious.

Contact the Blue Lamp Trust Bobby Scheme for extra home security surveys and free fitting of locks on windows and doors. Some conditions apply. [www.bluelamptrust.org.uk](http://www.bluelamptrust.org.uk) / Tel 0300 77700157

Crime Prevention Advice is given free without the intention of creating a contract. Neither does the Home Office nor Hampshire Constabulary take any other responsibility for the advice given.

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