

## **Exterior Doors**

- All doors are locked all the time especially when we leave the house – even if it's just for a few minutes.
- Doors are solid hardwood or metal-clad.
- Doors feature wide-angle peepholes 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 or friend, not under a doormat or planter, on a ledge, or in the mailbox.

## **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 strong, working key locks.
- A dowel or pin to secure a glass door has been installed to prevent the door from being shoved aside or lifted off the track.
- The sliding door is locked at all times, except when in use, and each time we leave the house.

## **Protecting Windows**

- Every window in the house has a working key lock or is securely pinned.
- Windows are always locked. There should be a pin or window stop to provide security, even when they are opened a few inches for ventilation.

## **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 bright, working light to illuminate visitors and the entry.
- Floodlights are used appropriately to ensure effective illumination.
- Outdoor lights are on in the evening – whether someone is at home or not. A photocell or motion-sensitive lighting system has been installed.
- Our house number is clearly displayed so police and other emergency vehicles can find the house quickly.

## **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 an extended period of time.
- A neighbor has been asked to tend the yard and watch our home when we are away.

## **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.
- Valuable items such as television, stereos, and computers have been inscribed with 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.

## **Apartment Additions**

- Does your landlord or building manager tightly control all keys?
- Is there some kind of control over who enters and leaves the building?
- Are walkways, entrances, parking areas, elevators, hallways, stairways, laundry rooms, and storage areas well-lighted, 24 hours a day?
- Are fire stairs locked from the stairwell side above the ground floor, so you can exit but no one can enter?
- Are mailboxes in a well-traveled, well-lighted area, and do they have good locks?
- Are things well-maintained – are burnt out lights replaced promptly, shrubs trimmed, trash and snow removed?

**Here is a list of questions you should consider when reviewing potential apartments or row houses.**

**Building/Exterior:**

**Controlled Access Entry**

- Access/Proximity Card
- Doorman
- Front Entry with Key

**Intercom System**

- Buzz in from apartment once call is placed to resident
- Resident must meet visitor at entry
  
- 24 Hour Front Desk
- Video Surveillance
- All Entrances are Well Lit
- Other Security Measures: \_\_\_\_\_

**Parking:**

- Gated/Secured Parking
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Apartments:**

- Deadbolt (*we recommend one inch deadbolts for all apartment doors*)
- Alarm System
- Wide Angle Peephole in Door
- Solid Core Doors
- Window bars on windows that can be access from a fire escape or the exterior
- Other

# EVALUATING THE SECURITY OF YOUR ROWHOME & APARTMENT



This checklist is intended to be a starting point and should not be considered the only questions you should ask yourself or your potential landlord. If there are concerns about specific issues in that otherwise “perfect” apartment, don’t be afraid to ask and negotiate with your landlord to make these security improvements. Be sure to get all of these commitments from them in writing as an addendum to your lease -- if they are unwilling to put it in writing then they will probably be unwilling to follow through. In addition, all of the commercially managed buildings who are listed with us are now required to list all of their security measures in their descriptions.

