



Keep your home secure at Christmas

Whether you're at home or away this Christmas, follow this advice to help protect your home.

1. Use timer switches on lights whenever you go out or as soon as it gets dark. A lounge light should stay on but using timers on additional lights can give the impression people are moving around.
2. Leave a radio on that is tuned to a talk station makes it seem that people are home.
3. Using TV simulator lights in a dark room can look like someone is watching television in bed.
4. Always close and lock all unattended doors and windows stops opportunist thieves entering your home – and saves energy.
5. Don't advertise what you have – draw the curtains or close the blinds when it gets dark.
6. **Look after your keys:**
 - a. Don't leave them near any openings as thieves can reach through or hook them using a pole through a letterbox for example.
 - b. Avoid hanging keys on hooks, which make them easy to find if you do get burgled. There have been some incidents where criminals break into a home to find keys to a vehicle parked on the driveway.
 - c. Keep them in a Faraday bag which blocks RFID signals (don't forget the spare key) – and take them to bed with you!
 - d. Don't leave keys in door locks – keep them out of sight but make sure all the residents know where they are kept in case of emergency.
7. **Sheds and garages** are popular hiding places to keep presents from prying eyes. Thieves know this and that they may contain alcohol and the freezers are full of Christmas goodies, so increase their security.
 - a. Screw any windows shut and cover them so people can't see what's inside.
 - b. If your garage has an internal door to your home, make sure this is secured with a good quality mortise lock.
 - c. Consider adding them to the burglar alarm system if you have one. Battery-powered alarms are available.
 - d. Secure garage doors with good quality padlocks to create multiple locking points.
 - e. Use closed shackle padlocks on a hasp and staple for sheds and replace the hinge fittings with one-way screws.
 - f. Secure ladders and any tools that could be used to break into your home.
 - g. Lock your bicycles, E-bikes and E-scooters to a ground anchor and register them on www.immobilise.com.

