



A Guide to Home Security

The security of your home is absolutely paramount. Why? Because you have the right to feel safe in your property and have confidence that your family and personal possessions are secure. This guide will talk you through the basics of putting a good security practice in place and the systems available to help keep your home protected.

Security systems

The most well-known and commonly-installed security system is an Intruder Alarm. These are electronic systems that allow you to alarm the property when it is vacant, and trigger an audible alert in the event an intruder gains entry. Intruder Alarms can also be connected to 24-hour monitoring services to ensure you're not just reliant on neighbours or passers-by to notify you of the situation.

System grading

Before an Intruder Alarm is installed, a risk assessment must be completed to establish the grade of system required to meet the unique needs of the client and property. This is carried out by the system installer. The higher the risk, the higher the grade of system required.

Grade 1: Low Risk e.g. a rural residential property

Grade 2: Low to Medium Risk e.g. a small business

Grade 3: Medium to High Risk e.g. a medium to large commercial premises

Grade 4: High Risk e.g. a high-value residential property or inner-city jewellers

Other types of security systems

CCTV: Cameras and recorders that capture security footage from areas in and around your property.

Access Control: Devices that enable you to control who can gain access to specific doors and rooms.

Audio & Video Entry: Systems that allow you to interact with visitors and control entry to the building.

Perimeter Detection: External sensors and beams that provide an early warning of intrusion.

Three Steps to Stronger Security

Step 1 - Deter

The first step is to deter the intruder and convince them that attempting to break-in is simply not worth their time. A combination of visual and physical deterrents can work together effectively to warn off criminals.

Visual deterrents, such as the presence of an external alarm sounder, CCTV cameras and security lighting, immediately show that the property is protected. The intruder knows breaking-in would raise the alarm and risk notifying neighbouring residents and the Police. CCTV ensures their movements are captured on camera, whilst good lighting increases the chance of being seen.

Physical deterrents located around the perimeter and outside the home are also very effective. These include walls, fences, gates, high security doors, windows and defensive planting schemes. All are designed to make it as difficult as possible for an intruder to reach the building itself, gain entry and also hinder any attempt to get away.

Step 2 - Detect

Electronic security systems are designed to detect the presence of an intruder, and raise the alarm in the event of someone gaining entry into the property, when the system is armed.

- Door sensors to detect the forced opening of a door.
- Window sensors to detect the forced opening of a window.
- Vibration sensors to indicate a physical attack on a window.
- PIR (Passive Infrared) sensors to detect movement inside a room.

Detection can also be used to alert to intrusion via external entry points around the property's perimeter, including gates and driveways.

Step 3 - Defend

In the event an intruder gains entry, it is vital to make it as difficult as possible for them to cause harm to the family or seek out high value items. This can be done through the use of security safes and panic rooms.

A security safe, vault, or a combination of both, allows you to keep high-value items secure. Safes are used predominantly for storing cash and jewellery, but are also used to protect possessions of high sentimental value. Safes are graded following stringent product testing and rated on the value of cash and jewellery they are most suited to hold.

Panic rooms offer families a 'safe haven' if their personal safety is at risk. These spaces are custom-designed to be hidden centrally within the home. They are intended to be impenetrable and provide the amenities to stay safe and comfortable until the emergency services arrive.

The Importance of Maintenance

Ensuring your systems are regularly maintained is crucial as this helps ensure they continue to function to their optimum ability, are always compliant and continue to be fit for purpose. Maintenance should be undertaken by fully-qualified engineers as part of an ongoing service agreement. Having this in place to support your systems is recommended by insurers and is often needed in order to make a claim.

Monitoring

This service provides 24-hour monitoring of your systems via a dedicated Alarm Receiving Centre (ARC). This is to ensure you are immediately notified about any alarm activations, and can respond appropriately. You can choose for the ARC to contact emergency keyholders, and providing certain conditions are met, the Police.



Best Practice

Intrusions can be opportunist, planned or targeted. To thwart an opportunist thief, it is important to be vigilant as often, protection can be achieved through doing a few simple things.

Security tips:

- Always set your intruder alarm, no matter how long you are going to be away from the property.
- Always close and lock your windows and doors.
- Keep valuable items and keys out of sight. If possible, secure high-risk possessions in a safe.
- Do not advertise your wealth or whereabouts on social media platforms.
- Keep outside areas tidy to show the property is maintained.

To protect against a planned or targeted threat, counter surveillance may be required.

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