



Keep Your Home Secure While Vacationing

Tips for keeping your home safe and secure:

There are a lot of things to think about when you leave your home to go on vacation. Your security preparations should extend beyond just locking the doors. If you're leaving your home for an extended period of time, there are a few things you should consider doing.

1. **Have a Trusted Neighbor Stop By**

They can water your plants, pick up any deliveries, or move your car. This is great way to make your home look lived in and watched.

2. **Make it *Look Like You Are Home***

Set your lights on a timer so they come on and off from time to time. Add timers to other things, like your television. Leave a car parked outside your garage if possible. Ask a neighbor to shovel your walkway so it looks used.

3. **Don't Announce You Are Leaving**

In the social media world we live in, it is easy to over-share. You can't be sure that your privacy settings will keep your announcement private. It is difficult to be sure that what started out as private, stays private. Wait until you return and share your fun and photos then! It's probably best to simply keep it quiet about your plans. The less people who know, the better off you'll be.

"Home security is more than locking the doors."





4. **Unplug**
Disconnect the power on appliances and other fire hazards. Protect your home as much as possible from an electrical fire while you are away. Also, turn off your garage door. It may prevent a break-in.
5. **Put the Spare Key Away**
You won't need the Hide-a-Key while you are away. So put it away! Or leave it with a trusted neighbor just in case. That way they can check on things for you if necessary.
6. **Turn the Heat Down**
Save on heat while you are away. Set your thermostat to an economical 55 degrees. That's warm enough to keep things safe, but cool enough to save you some money.
7. **Utilize a Fire-proof Safe**
Lock up your valuables. Even if someone does break in, they'll have a harder time accessing the truly sentimental and valuable items if you store them away in a properly installed safe.
8. **Use Your Webcam as a Surveillance Camera**
Surveillance systems do not come cheap. You can set up a fairly effective option yourself. There are many free software options available on the internet. Many allow you to View and record live videos. Some allow motion detection and send you alerts. Do some research and set yours up!
9. **Tell your Alarm Company**
If you have a home protection service in place, tell them you are leaving!
10. **Hold Your Mail**
An overstuffed mailbox, or packages left sitting on your step for days on end is an obvious sign that you are not at home. Stop by or go online to the United States Postal Service and ask them to stop delivery until you get back. Don't forget to do the same for your newspaper too!

Sara Elliott "10 Tips for Keeping Your Home Safe While on Vacation" 6 July 2010. HowStuffWorks.com. <<http://home.howstuffworks.com/home-improvement/home-diy/safety/10-tips-for-keeping-house-safe-while-on-vacation.htm>> 2 March 2017

Erin Raub "10 Ways to Protect Your Home While You're Away/On Vacation" 18 February 2016. Safety.com. <<https://www.safety.com/blog/10-ways-to-protect-your-home-while-youre-on-vacation/>> 2 March 2017