



## Burglary Myths

With so many conflicting home safety and security precautions and tips on offer, it can be tricky to decide which measures will enhance your home security and ensure that you and your possessions will be safe. Following incorrect advice can leave you vulnerable to criminals.

**Windows:** Many people think that windows are the most popular entry point for burglars, and having burglar bars on your windows is undoubtedly essential. Surprisingly, research shows that many criminals prefer doors to access homes. Also, many burglaries happen while people are at home, so leaving your doors unlocked when a home is a considerable risk, even if you live in a gated community. Ensure you secure street-facing and off-street doors, as both can provide opportunities for burglars. Street-facing doors offer easy access, whereas off-street doors provide cover for thieves to conduct their nefarious business. A good quality security gate is one of the best ways to protect your home from burglars entering via doors. Whichever security gate you choose, ensure it is always locked – and don't leave the key where criminals can reach it.



**Dogs:** It is not the size of the dog that deters would-be criminals – it's the size of the bark. Bark frequency and pitch are what alert criminals to a dog's presence. Smaller dogs that tend to bark a lot are possibly better at alerting you to an intruder so that you can act quickly – call for help, push the panic button or run to your safe room.

**Hidden valuables:** It's a mistake to believe that the hiding place where you put your documents and valuables is a secret. This is because most people hide their stuff in the same places. Even the most unusual places, like your freezer or the pantry, will probably be uncovered by experienced criminals. The best option for ensuring your valuables will be safe in the event of a burglary is to install a secure safe that cannot be removed – any safe that can be carried away is not a secure storage space.

**Time:** Many people mistakenly believe criminals need plenty of time to do their work, but research shows they can be in and out in minutes. Thieves are opportunistic and quickly scope out their area for easy targets. For example, they look for homes that are poorly secured, empty or have no security sign boards – and promptly take their gap.

Many burglars are experts at spotting and exploiting flaws in your home security system. They know exactly what to look for and use this knowledge to find the fastest way into and out of your home. Because of this, burglars may abandon targets if they are met with enough obstacles to slow them down.

**Time of day:** Most people think their homes are more vulnerable at night when they are out. This is because many break-ins occur in the dark, giving burglars added invisibility. However, with so many people leaving their homes unattended from morning to night when the family is at work or school, daylight break-ins are becoming easier to pull off and are becoming more common. In fact, most suburban break-ins happen in broad daylight, when people are at work.

Source: Locklatch/www.sandtonchronicle.co.za

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