

# General Prevention Information

*The information presented here is of a generalised nature and given in good faith. Victoria Police in providing this information makes no representation nor gives any warranty or guarantee concerning the safety of persons or property, or the effectiveness of any suggestions or information contained herein. Victoria Police does not accept any responsibility for any damage or loss, however caused, suffered from an individual or corporation arising from the use or application of these guidelines. Users of these guidelines must satisfy themselves as to the adequacy of the guidelines for the purposes of their own safety and security. Victoria Police does not endorse any specific company, brand or product. It is up to the individual to research companies and their products, then decide what is most appropriate for their needs.*

Securing your home is as much about providing protection for you, your family, and your private property as it about providing a comfortable home to feel safe in. You may not feel that everything offered in this document is right or even relevant for your needs or your family.

For most people, the right balance of security will allow you to feel safe and comfortable inside your home without feeling like you're living inside cage.

For certain people this means putting up CCTV cameras and lights but not modifying the design of their yard or home. This will be in keeping with their lifestyle, so this is where their level of comfort sits.

Other people will want to install additional locks everything that opens or closes and physical security features such as higher fences and more robust doors. This is what they need to feel comfortable because it gives them that sense of safety and security.

The information in this document is not exhaustive and does not cover advanced security measures like infrared trip beams connected to external alarms.

Everything spoken about is available from hardware stores. Products like CCTV systems and security film can also be professionally installed by security companies.

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# Quick Tips:

## Your Yard

### **“Do.”**

1. Mow lawns and keep the garden tidy – makes the home looked occupied.
2. Minimise places to hide behind – cut back thick bushes, trees and hedges.
3. Keep front entry clean of dust and spiderwebs – makes the home looked occupied.
4. Install gates across the driveway.
5. Install a gate between the front and rear yard.
6. Install locks on gates.
7. Install a lock on your mailbox.

## Your Yard

### **“Don’t”**

1. Don’t leave shoes at the front door.
2. Don’t leave bicycles/scooters or e-scooters in the front yard.
3. Don’t let mail build up in the letter box.
4. Don’t leave ladders, tools/building materials laying around.

## Your House

### **“Do.”**

1. Fit privacy blinds or sheer curtains/window tint.
2. Fit a security screen door with a multipoint lock.
3. Fit a multipoint lock, deadbolt or other secondary lock to the main door.
4. Install locks on all windows and skylights.
5. Install locks on doggy doors.
6. Install sensor lights.
7. Install CCTV and a doorbell camera. (In conjunction with sensor lights)
8. Consider security film for windows – reinforces the glass.
9. Consider an alarm system.

## Your House

### **“Don’t”**

1. Allow people to see clearly into through your windows.
2. Leave any doors (even when home) and windows unlocked.
3. Leave garage unlocked/open – even during the day.
4. Hide a spare key outside the house.

## Your Car

### **“Do.”**

1. Use off street parking.
2. Park in the garage where available.
3. Keep the inside clean and tidy.
4. Consider a car alarm.
5. Consider a kill switch/Immobiliser.
6. Consider GPS tracking.
7. Fit anti-theft screws to number plates.

## Your Car

### **“Don’t”**

1. Leave anything of value in a car parked outside overnight or in public spaces.
2. Leave documents that have personal information inside.
3. Don’t leave bags or work gear on the seats/floor.
4. Leave your wallet/purse or house keys in the glove box or centre console.
5. Leave the car running and “just duck inside.”
6. Leave the windows down or the car unlocked.

## Outside Your House.



- Having a fence across the front of the property with a gate across the driveway limits how and where people access your property. Close and lock the driveway gate overnight.
  - The fence does not need to be high. Visibility of the front of your home to your neighbours is a good thing. A high fence affords both privacy from the street and cover for an offender.
  - Consider using lattice to increase the height of fencing and gates leading to the rear of your home. Make it harder for offenders to jump the fence into your back yard.
- In the front yard, consider trimming large hedges/thick bushes and low hung trees or foliage that gives cover for offenders.

- Having sensor lights across the front, side access and rear of your home.
  - Consider positioning sensors to activate as soon as someone enters onto your property, well before they reach the front door.
  - Sensor lights increase the effectiveness of CCTV for the identification of offenders as they can appear in full colour and not washed-out night vision. Sensor lights can also attract the attention of your neighbours.
    - Consider installing sensor lighting all around your home. This removes the cover of darkness everywhere.
    - Simple lighting fitted under the eaves can be effective without upsetting your neighbours with bright flood lights pointing outwards and over fences.
- CCTV and doorbell cameras. What to consider when installing CCTV.
  - Cover all entry and exit points, your driveway and the street in front of your house.
  - Ensure CCTV cameras only cover your property. Avoid angles that capture your neighbours' property.
  - Make CCTV cameras visible. Do not use fake cameras.
  - Securely attach the camera or video-doorbell to the house.
  - Ensure the system has adequate storage space.
  - Ensure the storage system is well hidden, secured and backed up off site.
  - Understand the security settings for your network.
  - Consider the image quality during the day and at night. For offenders to be identified, images need to be clear.
  - Pair CCTV with sensor lights and alarms to maximise protection. Look for systems which send alerts to your mobile phone.
- Consider CCTV in the following locations:
  - Above the garage or at the back of the carport facing down the driveway toward the street (to cover cars).



- o On the opposite side of the house covering the front yard and the front of the house.
  - o At the rear corner of the house looking towards any gates/fences that separate the front yard from the back yard.
  - o Looking across the rear of the house.
  - o Inside a garage looking across your cars towards an internal door to the house.
- Doorbell Cameras are most effective when facing the direction people approach from. Consider installing the doorbell:
    - o As close to being directly next to the door as possible.
    - o Or on the door above the door handle.

**\*\*Doorbell Cameras installed on a wall facing across the door can be seen and avoided by an offender by pulling clothing across their face or turning their back to the camera.**

- CCTV options include:
  - o Wireless
    - Pros include ease of installation and setup. No need to run cables through the roof and walls.
    - Cons include needing to take the devices down to charge the batteries. If the wi-fi stops working your cameras might stop working. Large or complex homes may need a 'wi-fi signal repeater/range extender' to boost the signal or cameras may not connect.
  - o Wired
    - Pros include no need to charge batteries. Not dependant on the status or strength of your wi-fi signal.
    - Fully digital systems support higher quality cameras/resolutions, require only one CAT5e (support Power Over Ethernet or POE) cable for power and video and may support remote viewing.

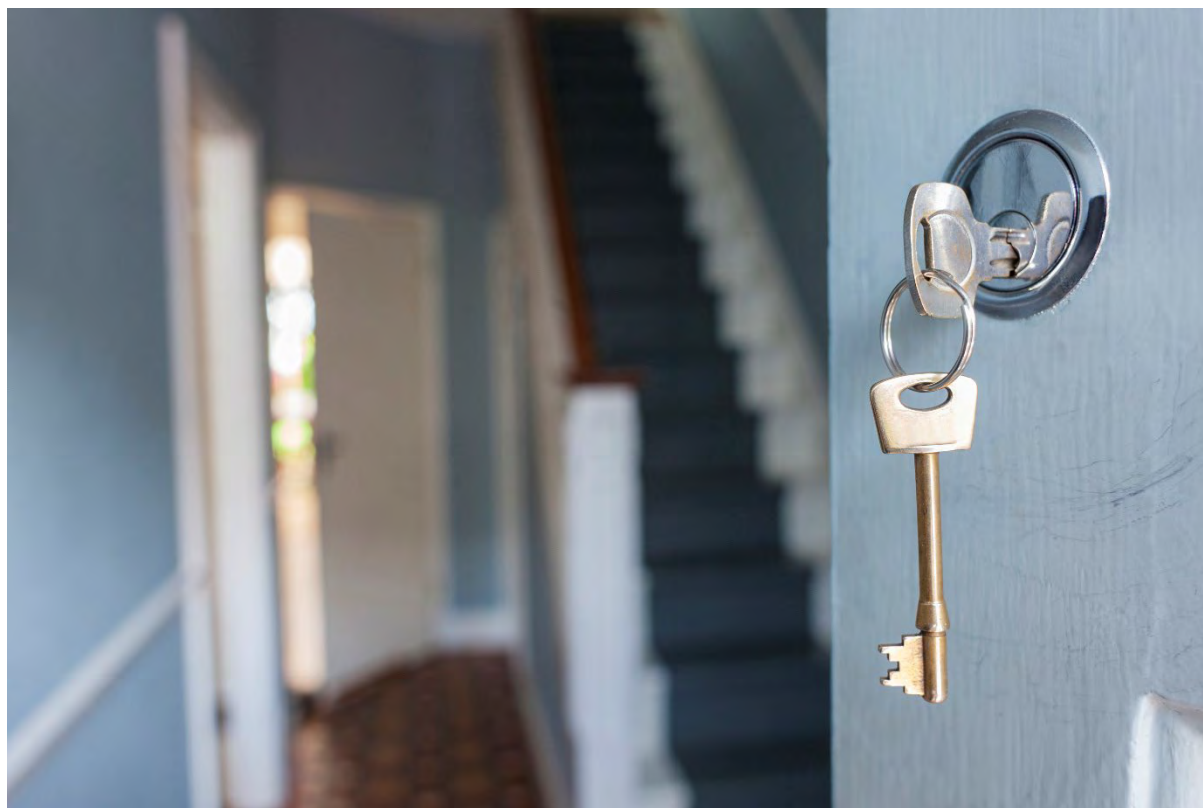
- Cons include the need to run cables through the roof/walls.
- Older analogue systems support lower quality cameras and resolutions and need two cables: one for power to a separate power source and one to the recording box. May not support remote viewing.
- o Motion detection.
  - Pros include preserves battery life on wireless cameras and uses less storage on NVRs with small hard drives. Limits the frequency of notifications.
  - Cons include it does not always work properly. Atmospheric conditions may cause motion detection to miss things, only partially capturing an incident or not recording anything at all. Incorrect field of detection settings may allow an offender to inadvertently slip past your camera without setting it off.
  - Being able to record 24/7 means you won't miss a thing.
- o Additional Features.
  - Some cameras have extra features including motion activated flood lights, external alarm/sirens, or blue and red flashing lights.
  - Audible alarms attract attention and can scare away offenders.
- Not leaving tools or other implements outside that an offender can use to smash windows or force door open.
  - o Same goes for building materials such as bricks and pavers.
  - o Ladders should not be left outside as they afford access to your roof and the second level of your home.
- Consider having dogs sleep in the back yard or inside the main part of the house and not locked in a laundry or spare room at the back.



- o Dogs can give early detection, and a barking dog (even a small dog) is a deterrent.
- o A barking dog will wake you up and alert you to potential intruders late at night.

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## Inside Your House.



*A common cause for burglary is open or unlocked doors and windows. Offenders will try doors at the front/side and rear of homes for an unlocked door.*

- The external door giving access from the yard to the garage, and from inside the garage to inside the house should be a solid core door with more than one lock.
- Consider installing sheer privacy curtains or blinds on all windows and glass doors in addition to any curtains or blinds that are already fitted.
  - You may prefer tinted windows.
  - Anything that limits people's ability to see inside your home limits the likelihood they can see your valuables and learn the layout of your house.
- Consider installing security screen doors on the outside of all external doors.

- Additionally, doors with multipoint locks make it harder to lever a door open with a prybar or similar tool.
  - A locked security door is your first and last line of protection when any of your external doors are open.
  - Especially when answering your front door.
  - If you have a glass window at the front door, consider a matching security screen across this window to prevent offenders smashing the glass and reaching inside to unlock your doors.
- Consider using additional locks to secure existing external doors. Do not rely on one lock to prevent offender from forcing a door open.
- Consider installing Security Film on all glass windows and doors. This increases the strength of the glass and makes it harder to smash.
  - There are companies who offer security film that can you used over the top over an existing thermal films or tints.
  - This may be an option for windows adjacent to doors if you don't like to idea of a security screen across the window.
- Fit locks on all windows.
  - Not locking wind-out windows allows offenders to lever and pull the window open.
    - Offenders can pull the base of the window frame away from the chain where the screws attach to the rear of the frame.
    - Consider brands who offer a small device which installs through the front of the window frame, to the rear:
    - The screws that attach the chain go into the device and not the window frame. This sandwiches the frame between two pieces of metal and prevents the frame from being forced away from the chain.

- 'One-way' or anti-theft screws bolting the window winder into the frame prevents the entire window winder from unscrewed and removed.
- You can reinforce drop style windows with a latch at the top of the frame by fitting a horizontal lock. Consider a patio bolt or similar style sliding lock.
- Consider a vertical bolt installed at the base of swinging and sliding doors to decrease the odds of the door opened by force.
  - These should not be lockable. You may need to open them quickly and without a key in an emergency – i.e., to escape a fire.
- Offender may use tools to lever sliding doors off the rail.
  - Consider adjusting the vertical tension of the rollers on the doors make this more difficult or fitting newer adjustable rollers.
- Consider installing an alarm that monitors doors and windows even when you are home.
  - Where this is cost too expensive you can buy small stand-alone devices for doors, windows, and gates. These are battery powered, have push button operation and sound an alarm when the door or window opens.
    - Can be an effective deterrent where a door or window does not lock or close properly.
- If your circuit breakers/fuse box is installed on the outside of the house in the meter box, consider fitting an electrical industry standard lock or padlock. This will help stop people turning the power off to your home.
- You may consider moving the circuit breakers/fuses inside the home or garage, away from the meter box. This also means you don't need to go outside to check them when the power goes out.

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## Cars & Motorbikes.



Half of all theft from motor vehicle offences have no signs of forced entry. Physically check your car is locked before walking away.

- Keep the inside clean.
- Do not leave bags or clothing on the seats.
  - Handbags, laptop bags, backpacks and 'tradie' work clothing all attract the interest of offenders.
- Do not leave wallets/purses, mail, bills, or personal documents with personal details in your car.
  - This helps prevent identity theft.
  - This helps prevent unauthorised use of you ATM and Credit Cards.

- If your car is broken into in a public car park, this will prevent thieves from learning your address, going to your home, and breaking in whilst knowing you aren't home.
- Do not leave a spare car key or 'concierge key' in your car.
- Where available, consider parking cars in the garage instead of leaving them on the street or in the driveway.
  - Cars parked on the street are an easier target.
  - Out of sight is out of mind.
- Ensure your car has locked before you walk away.
  - If your car locks and unlocks automatically according to the distance the car key is from the car, make sure you keep the key far enough away that your car cannot be opened just by trying the door handle.
  - At home, please consider keeping your car keys in a metal tin or RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) blocking pouch to reduce the risk of car thieves using a relay attack to steal your car. (Thieves intercept the signal between your car keys and car, tricking the car into thinking they have the key)
  - Please consider installing a car alarm to scare off offenders and alert you that someone is trying to break into your car.
  - Please consider installing a kill switch in your car to disable the fuel pump. This will prevent the engine from starting if someone tries to steal your car. (Inquire with an Auto Electrician)
  - Please consider installing an OBD (Onboard Diagnostic) Port lock. This will help prevent thieves using electronic means to bypass your car's security features and steal it. (Can be purchased online)
  - In relation to GPS tracking, Apple Air Tags can be found by anyone with an iPhone which will cause the tag to 'Ping' allowing it to be located inside your car. There are tutorials online about disabling this feature, however there are other options available that remain silent.
  - A steering wheel lock is a visible deterrent to car thieves.

- o When training at a gym, please don't leave items of value in the public lockers. These should ideally be used for storage of clothing and bathing items. Phones, wallets/purses, and car keys should be kept in a small sports bag that follows you around the gym as you exercise.
  - o Installing front and rear dash camera will give you piece of mind in an accident but may also help to deter thieves or provide evidence for Police.
  - o Please fit anti-theft screws to the registration plates on your car. This will make it much harder for thieves to steal your plates.
- Park your motorbike in a garage or at the rear of the property/behind a locked gate.
  - o Out of sight is out of mind.
  - o The steering lock or bike lock alone will not stop offenders from taking your bike.
  - o Offenders can lift and carry a motorbike.
    - Parking behind a car in a carport will not prevent this.
    - Your car may be damage while offenders are manoeuvring the bike out.

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## Who to Call.

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*If the incident is happening now, the suspect is still on scene or if anyone is injured or in immediate danger, call Triple Zero (000).*

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For non-emergencies, report through our [Online Reporting service](#) or call the Police Assistance Line 131 444.

You can also report anonymously to [Crime Stoppers](#) on 1800 333 000.

Forest Hill Police Station

469 Springvale Road Vermont South.

Ph: 8847 3600

Box Hill Police Station

1 Kangerong Road Box Hill

Ph: 8892 3200

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*Prepared by the Whitehorse Crime Prevention Officer.*

*Box Hill Police Station*

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