

Layers to Securing Your Home

Your Boundary

Criminals avoid being seen, heard or delayed. Your property boundary can play an important role in deterring crime. A front boundary no taller than 1 metre allows a criminal to be seen as they approach your property. Conversely, a high boundary at the front of your home allows a criminal to approach without being seen. The exception is railings, which can be taller, as long as they allow natural vision through them (designs that permit climbing should be avoided). The opposite applies to rear and side boundaries, which should be a minimum of 1.8 metres tall (but not exceeding 2 metres without planning permission). Gravel driveways generate noise when walked upon and can deter intruders. Rear and side fences can be made taller obstacles against climbing by having [diamond shaped trellis](#) attached to the top. This can be made even more difficult for criminals by the addition of spikey plants, the most common is [Pyracantha](#) (Fire thorn). Other spikey plants include [Berberis](#), [Osmanthus](#), [Poncirus](#), [Crataegus](#), [Aralia](#), [Chaenomeles](#), [Ribes](#), [Oplopanax](#), [Eleagnus](#), [Robinia](#), [Colletia](#), [Ilex](#), [Climbing roses](#), [Maclura](#), [Mahonia](#), [Ligustrum](#) (privet), [Laurel](#), [Smilax](#), [Xanthoxylum](#). Side & rear gates should be the same height as the fence and ideally, a side gate to the rear garden should not be recessed beyond the building line any more than 60cm, to prevent a criminal forcing the gate whilst unseen. Gates should ideally have 2 locking points (1/3rd of the way up and 1/3rd of the way down), either substantial [hasp & staples](#), with [closed shackle padlocks](#), or a [long-throw Gate-Mate lock](#) is ideal for many thinner modern wooden gates. Wheelie bins should be stored behind secure side gates until collection day, to prevent climbing gates and fences. Barbed wire, gripper-rod & glass on fences can result in legal action. Plastic [Prikka-Strip](#) can be used instead, but may require signs.



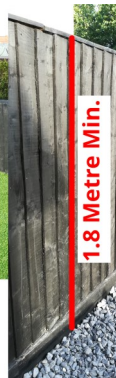
[One-way screwhead.](#)



[Fence spikes.](#)



Garden Fences, short at the front, taller at the rear.



[Eye-bolt.](#)



Good quality [gate rim locks.](#)



For up & over garage doors ["T" lock](#) (left) and [Enfield bolt](#) (above) for each side.

Your Outbuildings

Purpose made after market locks for metal up-and-over garage doors are available. Some are made for the side of the garage door ([Enfield Bolts](#)), in which case they should be added either side at 30cm above the floor to reduce leverage points. A ["T" shaped locking bar](#) on the ground in the centre of the garage door can act as a visible deterrent. An electric garage door is unlikely to require additional security. Wooden garage double doors can be secured with two [closed shackle padlocks](#) and substantial [hasp & staples](#), (ideally one lock a 1/3rd of the way up and another 1/3rd of the way down). Garage side or rear wooden doors will need a [British Standard 5-lever mortice locks](#) in the middle and 2 additional [mortice rack bolts](#) (one lock a 1/3rd of the way up and another 1/3rd of the way down) would be ideal to prevent leverage. Shed doors can be secured with two substantial [hasp & staples](#), with [closed shackle padlocks](#) (ideally one lock a 1/3rd of the way up and another 1/3rd of the way down). External shed hinges need to be secured by screws or bolts that cannot be removed easily with a screwdriver or spanner, such as [smooth round head bolts](#) or [one-way clutch head screws](#). Garage and shed windows can be secured with [internal diamond mesh grilles](#), which provide a good visual deterrent to opportunistic burglaries. Garden tools can be property marked (with post code & door number) to prevent theft and to prevent them being used as implements to break-into your home, they could be chained and padlocked to an [eye bolt](#).

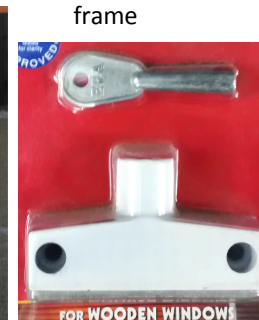


Substantial [hasp & staples](#) on left, [closed shackle padlocks](#) and [Mortice rack bolt.](#)

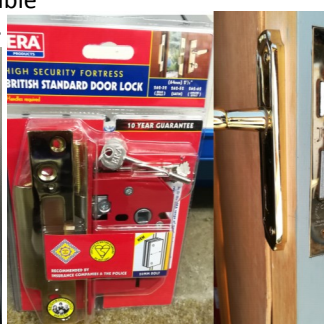
[Shoot-bolts.](#)



Wooden frame



British Standard Double glazing door lock.



[British Standard 5-Lever mortice lock](#) for wooden doors.

"Yale" style rim locks for a wooden front door.



Your Main Residence

Intruder alarms are one of the best deterrents against burglary, as burglars do not want to be seen or heard. Whilst DIY install alarms exist, ideally an alarm system should be installed by a company affiliated to an inspectorate body, such as NSI or SSAIB. Alarm boxes with flashing lights are required at the front and rear of the building to indicate activation. Alarm systems vary in operation, from audible only, to systems that send text messages all the way through to monitored systems. Security lights make burglars feel vulnerable and at risk of being seen. Patio doors should have a minimum of three locking points, with an [anti-lift device](#) to prevent the doors being lifted from runners. Specific additional patio door locks ([Patlock](#)) are available to purchase. Externally beaded windows should be secured with security clips, security tape or sealant. All ground floor windows (and any windows that are easily accessible above ground floor), should have key operated window locks, unless they are being used as fire escapes. Window handles should operate multi-locking [shoot bolts](#) the frame. If not, surface mounted key operated locks can be fitted for additional security and to reduce leverage points. [Louvred windows](#) should ideally be replaced with a fixed glass pane. Internal light bulbs that come on via an app or a timer, can give the impression that the premises are occupied.

Your Outer-Doors

PVCu and aluminium doors should have multi-locking systems. Doors should be double locked, to prevent them being easily forced. Keys should be handy to aid escape in the event of emergency, but not placed where they can be ["fished"](#) through the letterbox, [letterbox shields](#) can be fitted to prevent this. Wooden front doors should be solid timber, with a [British Standard 5-lever mortice lock](#) and an automatic [deadlocking rim latch](#) one third of the way down. Wooden back doors should be solid timber, with [British Standard 5-lever mortice lock](#) and two additional locks (called [mortice rack bolts](#)). Door frames can be reinforced with metal strips around the frame called ["London" and "Birmingham" bars](#). [Hinge bolts](#) can be fitted to outward opening doors. Ideally, glass panels in doors should be replaced with laminated glass or reinforced internally with security film or grilles. [Door viewers](#) provide good vision and [door chains](#) provide a barrier against unwanted callers.

Your Valuables

A safe can be used to secure important documents and valuables, providing it is secured to a solid wall. Property marking, with identifiable items registered on [www.immobilise.com](#) (serial numbers etc) will assist in deterring theft as well as increasing the chance of assisting a prosecution and the items return - the desire to sell electronics in the future may deter property marking. Mobile phones are identified by their IMEI number, which is obtained by typing *#06#. Valuable or unique items can be catalogued and photographed. Lights & a radio plugged into a time switch or operated by an app can give the impression that the premises are occupied. Leaving valuables in a place where they can be seen by people calling at the address or leaving empty boxes for electrical goods in outbuildings or next to your rubbish bin may provide an incentive to an opportunistic thief. Bicycle frame numbers recorded on [www.bikeregister.com](#). Consider home CCTV, guidance on CCTV & GDPR at [ico.gov.uk](#).

Home Security Guide



Produced by Age UK Isle of Wight's Neighbourhood Watch Plus Project

Your property attracts burglars

- High front boundary – break-in unseen.
- Low side and rear boundaries – easy access.
- Recessed insecure side gate.
- Wheelie bin in front of side gate – for climbing over into the rear.
- Insecure garage door—invites thieves.
- Insecure shed or garage door.
- Paved driveway and path—silent approach.
- No intruder alarm.
- No security lights.
- No internal lights on in the evening.
- Insecure front door—not double locked.
- Open or insecure windows.
- Valuables visible or not protected.
- New or desirable car on the drive.

Your property repels burglars

- Low front boundary.
- High side and rear boundaries with trellis and spikey defensive planting.
- Secure side gate, not recessed.
- Wheelie bin behind locked side gate.
- Secure garage door.
- Secure shed door and window.
- Gravel driveway and path.
- Intruder alarms.
- Security light/s. Internal lights on timers.
- Secure front door.
- Closed and locked windows.
- Valuables protected and/or hidden.
- CCTV system as an option - [advice on GDPR](#).
- Some burglars are put off by dogs.

Your Online Banking & Scams

Online banking is quick and convenient, but criminals target users in increasingly sophisticated ways. If criminals take money from your account without your involvement, banks should reimburse you; but if you transfer the money or give a third party any banking details, they will not and most victims are not refunded. There are some simple steps that you can take to prevent fraud: Never give anyone (even the bank or police) your card pin, login details, or a one time passcode. Never click on a link in an e-mail or SMS text from your bank. Never call a phone number in an e-mail or SMS text from your bank. Never give any details if someone cold calls your phone or visits you claiming to be your bank. Never perform a banking transfer for anyone you have not met in person and you know to be genuine. If you are cold called on your phone and told that your account or card has been compromised, used in fraud or seized, always be open to the possibility that this could be a fraud. Incoming caller ID's can be faked to appear to come from your bank. Be polite, do not provide any information, take the name of the caller and their department and if appropriate tell the caller to put a temporary block on the card or account. Terminate the call, but then make a short call to a friend or relative, as this will ensure that the potential fraudster has not left the line open. Then phone the fraud line at your bank and verify the information given to you in the cold-call. Publicly available Wi-Fi hot-spots in shops, hotels and cafes can be used by criminals to steal your banking information, so should be avoided for online banking. This is the case even if you have to use a password to log into the network. 3G, 4G & 5G connections are encrypted, which helps to avoid fraud. When using online auction, holiday or ticketing websites, never be tempted to trade off the site using a banking transfer or online currency. In the case of online auctions, only deliver to the purchaser's address verified by the auction site and always use the payment method specified in the terms & conditions, such as PayPal. [Cyber security](#) - never respond to, or open links in unsolicited e-mails, even if they look genuine unless you have verified their authenticity. Keep your electronic devices updated regularly to avoid hacking and when the operating system is no longer supported with updates, cease to use the device or upgrade the operating system. Use appropriate security software and regularly backup your data to avoid the effects of ransomware. Avoid traders who want you to pay via PayPal, but to do so via clicking on "sending money to a friend or family" - your purchase is not protected. Only purchase from websites you know to be genuine. Protect yourself from scams by downloading & reading two regularly updated books free from [www.met.police.uk](#) called "The Little Book of Big Scams" and "The Little Book of Cyber Scams" - search for each book on their website to locate them. Trading Standards have an excellent online learning package called Friends Against Scams, which takes about 20 minutes and can be found here [www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk](#). **Never buy from cold callers at your door or on your phone.**

Your Home when you are away

- Check that your home & outbuildings are secured each time you leave, even if going out for a short time.
- If an alarm is fitted & working, remember to set it.
- Your home can be made to look occupied by internal lights on a time switch or smart light bulbs on an app. A radio can also be put on a timer.
- A trusted neighbour can be requested to push post through your letterbox and accept deliveries for you so that it is not obvious you are away.
- Deliveries such as milk, newspapers and other items can be cancelled.
- A trusted neighbour could park their car on your drive, so that the home looks occupied.
- If you have a trusted close friend or relative living nearby with a key, ask them to draw your curtains/blinds in the evening and back in the morning.
- Avoid leaving the curtains drawn during the day.
- If you have a lawn, mow it before you go away.
- Avoid displaying your home address on the outside of your luggage.
- Posting holiday updates on social media may advertise that your home will be unoccupied for a prolonged period of time.
- Close and lock doors and windows when you go out – even if just for a short time – and when you go to bed at night - remember doors into garages or conservatories.
- Keep all keys in a place where they're not visible.
- Avoid leaving keys in the door, nor hiding a spare key outside.
- Keep valuables hidden and not visible from windows.
- Avoid leaving packaging from new goods visible with your general rubbish, or in an out-building.
- Only give keys to someone you trust and know well.
- Change locks in a new property, so you know who has keys.
- Avoid keeping large amounts of cash in the house.