

# Home burglary - advice sheet

**Burglary can be a very upsetting for the victims. We understand that burglary in your home can feel like a personal crime and an invasion of your personal space.**

## How to report

If the offender is still near the scene, the crime is in progress, injury has been threatened / caused or there is a threat to life then please call 999. In all other cases report by calling 101.

If the worst does happen and you find that your home has been broken into, you can help us bring the offender to justice and potentially recover items stolen by following this forensic advice:

- Limit what you touch around your home. It is tempting to try and establish exactly what has been taken, but every surface you touch may be destroying potential fingerprint or DNA evidence.

- Broken windows should be left alone. Intruders have been known to leave DNA evidence on broken glass. If you clear the frame of broken glass prior to police arrival, you will also have cleared the potential for evidence to be obtained.
- Limit walking about within your home. Intruders can leave footwear marks which can be retrieved by our Crime Scene Investigators
- Any items or tools discarded by the intruder should be left where they are. If you see anything which does not belong in your home, leave it alone and let the officer know about it.

Following a report of a burglary, we will appoint an investigating officer who may take some or all of the following steps during the investigation:



- Obtain a statement from the victim and any other witnesses who may be identified.
- Conduct door to door enquiries in the area.
- Establish if there is CCTV footage in the area
- Task a crime scene investigator to attend and search for fingerprint or other evidence.
- Make attempts to trace stolen property through appeals and other channels

Where a burglary occurs in a shed or outbuilding at your home after an assessment by control room staff, a telephone investigator will record your crime. You will be asked a number of questions relating to the incident.

### What you can do?

- Identify where there is CCTV relevant to the incident and how to get hold of it.
- A crime scene investigator will be considered if any item has been left behind by the offender. In that case you will be asked to leave it insitu unless evidence maybe lost due to the weather. You would then be asked to recover it using a clean plastic bag to a sheltered dry location

- Name any possible witnesses after speaking to your neighbours

Please follow these simple tips to help improve your home security.

### Tips for the home

- Lock your doors and windows every time you leave the house, even when you're just out in the garden
- Hide all keys, including car keys, out of sight and away from the letterbox (remember a device could be used to hook keys through the letterbox)
- Consider installing good outside lighting
- Get a trusted neighbour to keep an eye on your property
- Leave radios or lights in your house on a timer to make the property appear occupied
- Make sure the fences around your garden are in good condition
- Secure bikes at home by locking them to an immoveable object inside a locked shed or garage

- Keep ladders and tools stored away; don't leave them outside where they could be used to break into your home
- Ensure side gates are locked to prevent access to the rear of the property
- Consider joining or forming a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme
- Remove valuables from view of ground floor windows
- Smartwater – how does this work? Smartwater allows you to mark your valuables with their own unique forensic code, allowing them to be traced back to you. It can be used on anything from electronic equipment to jewellery. It is easy to apply, only visible under UV light - does not leave unattractive marks or stains

SmartWater are offering people who live in the Warwickshire and West Mercia policing areas an exclusive opportunity to purchase a home security pack at a special promotional one-off price of £25 (current retail price of £75).

Go to <https://shop.smartwater.com/redeem/> or call 0800 521 669. Make sure you quote discount code WDBCRIME25.

## Business burglary

Business burglary includes all buildings or parts of buildings that are used solely and exclusively for business purposes.

If you find that your office/business or shop has been broken into, you can help us bring the offender to justice and potentially recover items stolen by following the forensic advice in this sheet. The Investigating officer will then complete their crimes enquiries in a similar way to the home burglary.

The Secured by Design website will give you advice and information on products tested to a national standard which are designed to reduce crime at home, or commercial premise.

[www.securedbydesign.com](http://www.securedbydesign.com)

Victim Support is an independent charity that help people affected by crime and traumatic events. They are not part of the police or any other criminal justice agency.

[www.victimsupport.org.uk](http://www.victimsupport.org.uk)

T: 0808 168 9111