



Preparing for and Responding to a Home Break-in

Experiencing a home break-in can be traumatizing and can occur despite your best efforts to avoid it. You must have a plan to prepare for and react to such situations.

Scenario 1: Your home is burglarized while you are gone

You enter your home and realize that your home has been burglarized:

1. Immediately withdraw from the house and move to a safe place (e.g. a neighbor's house). You do not want to take the chance that you might surprise the burglars should they still be in the home. Remember, your safety is more important than anything you own.
2. Call 911 and provide the operator with your name, address, what has happened, and where you are now.
3. Do not return to your home until the sheriff's deputy notifies you that it is safe to do so.

Scenario 2: You are in bed when a burglary attempt occurs

Prepare yourself by establishing a nightly security routine

1. If you have a burglar alarm system set it in "At Home" mode at bedtime.
2. Lock your bedroom doors.
3. Keep your cell phone on its charger next to your bed so you will have it in case it is needed.
4. Keep your car fob and your home security system remote next to your cell phone so you can activate them when appropriate.
5. Keep a flashlight next to your bed.
6. If you wish to arm yourself (e.g. pepper spray, knives, guns) keep your weapon within easy reach. In the case of guns, be sure to have your weapon in a secure container with rapid access features you can activate in the dark (e.g. RFID, Biometric). Violent home invasions are extremely rare in our community. The decision to use weapons in your home to defend yourself or your family is a personal choice that should be based on proper training and a comprehensive understanding of the conditions under which use of force is warranted.

What to do during an attempted or actual break-in

1. Be silent, try to determine how many people have broken in, where they are located, and if they are armed.



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2. Leave the house or, if that is not possible, take your phone, key fob, flashlight, and weapon (if you choose to arm yourself) to your safe area and lock yourself in.
3. Call 911 and, as quietly as possible, tell the operator:
 - a. Your name and address
 - b. That someone is in the house and you require immediate assistance
 - c. How many intruders there are, where they are, and if you think they are armed
 - d. Where you are located and if you have a weapon with you
4. Stay on the phone with the 911 operator and follow the operator's instructions.
5. Activate your car alarm and/or home security system alarm from your fobs if/when the 911 operator tells you to do so. Many burglars will flee at the sound of a car alarm as neighbors are likely to wake up and look out the window.
6. Do not leave your safe area until the sheriff's deputy arrives, clears the house, and knocks on the door to tell you it is safe to come out. If you chose to arm yourself, be sure that you tell the deputy you are armed before opening the door. You do not want to be mistaken as a threat when law enforcement sees you.

Remember, your top priorities should be to escape and call 911. Most burglars only want your stuff and have no desire to confront you.