

SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS, SECURE HOMES

**A BASIC, YET COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO CRIME PREVENTION IN
YOUR HOME AND AUTOMOBILES.**



**A COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT OF THE
GRAPEVINE POLICE DEPARTMENT'S
CRIME PREVENTION UNIT**

DISCLAIMER

The information provided in this manual should be considered as minimal recommendations to reduce the opportunity for a crime to occur. Following these suggested guidelines in most cases will help you from becoming a victim. However, it should be noted there are no absolutes and each situation may have different circumstances.

Also, there is no such thing as a crime-proof structure or building, and anything that is made by man can be defeated by man. By following these strategies, you will make committing a crime more difficult for the offender.

If you have any questions regarding the information contained within this guide, you can contact the Grapevine Police Department Crime Prevention Unit at.

817 410 3209

Or

crimeprevention@grapevinetexas.gov

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Introduction

Burglary is the fastest growing felony crime in America. Crime statistics indicate a burglary is committed in Texas every two minutes. But citizens can take extra steps to protect themselves against crime. The rules for protecting your home are very simple and basic. Two of the best measures you can take are good common sense and good solid locks. The steps that follow in this booklet are day and night, year round precautions that have been shown to work effectively – if you use them.

You cannot make a house completely burglary-proof, but you can make entry so difficult the burglar will go elsewhere in search of easier targets. Burglars tend to avoid those homes which will take time to gain entry, or where a substantial amount of noise will be generated in breaking in. Both time and noise will increase the chances of the burglar being discovered and ultimately apprehended.

This booklet is produced with the concept that good neighbors with strong ties among the people in their community, working with Law Enforcement have the most power to stop crime from happening in the first place. It is a basic overview of steps that citizens can take to help reduce the opportunity for crime to occur in their community. If citizens do not get involved, crime will continue to grow. Crime and the fear of crime threaten a community's well being. Crime in turn feeds on the social isolation it creates. You and your neighbors can prevent or break this vicious cycle, and in the process, build your community or neighborhood into a safer, friendlier, and more caring place to live.

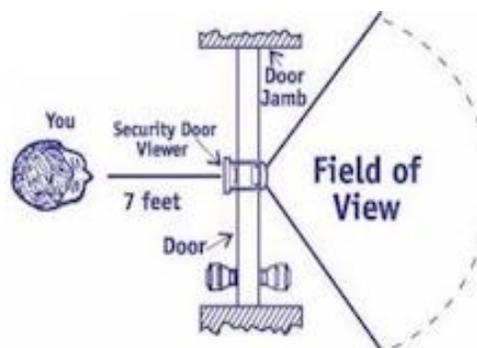
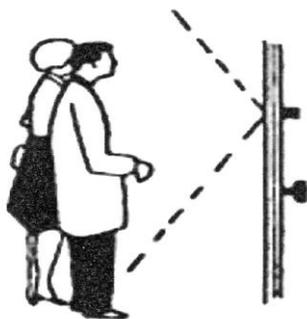
HOME SECURITY

Doors and Frames

All exterior doors should be either metal or solid core wood and should be at least 1-3/8 inches thick. Hollow core and panel doors do not provide the security of a solid core door and should not be used on the exterior of your home. A minimum of eight, three-inch-screws should be used to secure the door hinge to the door and door frame.



Never open the door to anyone unless you know them. A simple, inexpensive safety device is the one way, wide angle door viewer. For your personal protection, all exterior entry doors should be equipped with a wide angle door viewer of 190 degrees or more. This will allow you the ability to see who is at your door without having to open the door. Door chains or other similar devices do not offer you adequate protection against an intruder.



LOCKS

The most important thing to remember about locks is to use them every time you leave the house, even if for just a few minutes during the day. The most popular times for residential burglaries are weekday, daylight hours. In more than one third of burglaries, there is no forced entry. In those cases, someone simply left a door or window unlocked and in essence, invited the burglar inside. Good locks offer no protection if you leave extra keys in obvious places like under a doormat or in flower pots.

The majority of all doors are equipped with a standard entrance latch



(Also called a spring latch or key in the knob latch), these devices do not provide adequate security. They have a spring which holds the latch in place. They can be defeated by wrenching the knob with a large pair of pliers, by sliding a credit card between the door and frame, by kicking the door, or by spreading the frame with a pry bar. These types of latches should never be depended upon as the sole manner to secure your exterior doors.

The single cylinder deadbolt is key operated from the outside only.



The interior operation is a thumb knob. This lock is best utilized where there is no glass in the door or within 40 inches of the lock mechanism. When purchasing a deadbolt lock, it is important that the lock has a bolt, which is constructed of case hardened steel, extends a full one inch out and locks into place. When fully extended, the bolt should not be able to be pushed back in by hand. Also, it is important the hole in the door frame is sufficient depth to allow the bolt to be opened the full one-inch; otherwise it cannot lock in place and can be pushed back with a knife or screwdriver.

Deadbolt locks must engage a solid correctly installed strike plate or its effectiveness is significantly reduced. High security strike plates are wider and longer than standard strike plates. Three or more 3 ½ inch long hardened steel screws should be used to secure the door lock's strike plate to the door frame.

High security strike plate



Standard strike plate



Sliding glass patio doors can be among the easiest entry points for burglars.

To prevent the sliding glass door from being lifted out of its tracks, it should be pinned. This can be accomplished by purchasing a specially designed door pin, or by drilling a hole in the door frame and inserting a nail.

Special locks are available to secure the door against lifting and prying. Installing a “Charley Bar” can keep the sliding door from being pried open.



A cheaper alternative can be constructed using an old broom handle or other wooden stick. It should be cut to exact length of the exposed door track and placed so that the door cannot be opened when forced.

Windows can be pinned in the same manner to prevent them from being pried open. Drill a small downward sloping hole into the sliding portion of the window and into the frame of the fixed or stationary part of the window.

You can then insert a nail or pin to help prevent the window from being pried open.

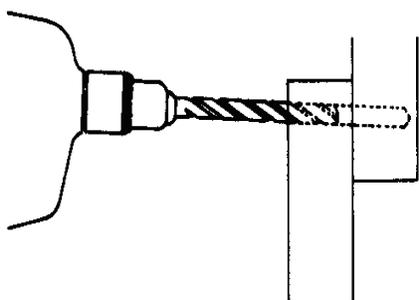


figure A



If you do not want to drill a hole in your window, a track lock is available that will fit any type of aluminum window. The lock features a thumb screw which clamps down on the track and prevents the window from being pried open. This type of lock allows you to open

the window for ventilation without compromising security. These track locks can be purchased at any hardware store.



Exterior Security

A very important consideration in securing your home is to make sure the exterior is uninviting to a burglar. Prune back shrubbery that hides the doors and windows or behind which a burglar could conceal himself. Cut back any tree limbs from which a burglar could reach an upstairs window. Keep your yard well maintained.

This gives the appearance that you care about your home and have taken steps to protect it. Store ladders and tools inside of your garage or storage shed and make sure these storage areas remain locked and well secured at all times.



Light porches, entrances and yards – front and back. Good exterior lighting is important, particularly when the yard is obscured by trees and shrubbery, or if these are dark areas.

You can buy inexpensive timers, photoelectric cells, or motion detectors to turn lights on and off when needed. Clearly display house numbers so that law enforcement or other emergency responders can find your home quickly.



Apartments and Condominiums

People who live in condominiums or multi-unit building have special security considerations, especially since there are many people coming and going much of the time. Many times it is difficult to know your neighbors when living in an apartment setting. Another consideration is that you must go through the Management Company or landlord to make security improvements.

Some of the things you may want to consider when living in a multi-unit building or complex are whether the landlord has taken steps to ensure your protection. Many of these precautions are dictated by state law, especially Texas. Does your entry door have a strong deadbolt lock and peephole? Is there a keyless deadbolt which allows you to lock your door while inside the apartment? Does the sliding glass door have a wooden dowel in the track so it can't be opened, and pins in the frame to prevent it from being lifted out? Does the landlord or building manager have strict control over keys and are apartments re-keyed after someone moves out.

You should also check out your building and see if there is some control over who enters and leaves the building. Are walkways, entrances, parking areas, hallways, stairways, laundry rooms, and storage areas well-lighted, 24-hours a day? Are mailboxes in a well traveled well lighted area and do they have good locks? Is the property well maintained? Are burned out lights fixed properly? Are shrubs trimmed and trash removed in a timely manner? Join or organize an apartment watch group so you and your neighbors can look out for and help each other. Work with the landlords or building managers to sponsor social events for tenants. Work with the management for changes that make everyone proud of where they live.

HOME SECURITY WHEN YOU'RE NOT HOME

Most burglars prefer to break into your house when no one is home; therefore anything you can do to make your house appear occupied will discourage burglars from picking your house as their target. Fortunately, it is relatively simple to make your house appear occupied. Don't leave obvious clues that you are gone. Don't leave notes on the door advertising you are gone or will be returning at a specific date and time. Make sure someone picks up the newspaper or deliveries.



Have a neighbor or friend you trust look after your house while you are gone. Ask to change the drapes or blinds around to appear as if someone is home. Request a neighbor to park their car in your driveway and to move it around occasionally. You can also have your neighbor put their garbage in front of your house on trash pickup day to give the appearance that you are home. If you are going to be gone for an extended period of time, have someone scheduled to mow your lawn for you as well. While it is important for some people to know you will be gone, don't tell everyone. The fewer people that know you will be gone, the better. Ensure you have several lamps placed on automatic timers. Have the timers set for different times in different rooms.



NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

Neighbor Watch is a crime prevention activity that enlists the active participation of citizens in cooperation with law enforcement to reduce crime in their communities.



It involves:

- **Neighbors getting to know each other, taking time to care about each other, and working together in a program of mutual assistance.**
- **Citizens being trained to recognize and report suspicious activities in their neighborhoods.**

Neighbor Watch was created to obtain citizen involvement discouraging and preventing residential crime. Neighborhood Watch programs are not designed as substitutes for police protection, rather they supplement police activities by providing extra eyes and ears. When neighbors know each other personally, they are more aware of each other's habits and routines. This awareness in turn makes them more observant of such activities which are suspicious or out of place.



Examples of these activities include strange cars in the neighborhood or suspicious persons who are at your house while you are away.

The participants make their neighborhood a safer place to live by becoming more active and involved in their neighborhood activities. As a result, they become more aware of problems when they occur. This will not take a lot of time and soon will develop into a daily

routine of watching out for what goes on in your neighborhood. Neighborhood Watch programs help to create an identity within the neighborhood, which in turn fosters a sense of pride and belonging for participants.

Neighborhood Watch operates to educate participants in the principles of deterrence, delay, and detection. The program depends on a communications network organized within three levels of participants: the residents block captains, and representatives of the Grapevine Police department. Reduction in burglary is likely because it is a well publicized program of prevention and target hardening, coupled with citizen concern for the safety and security of the neighborhood.

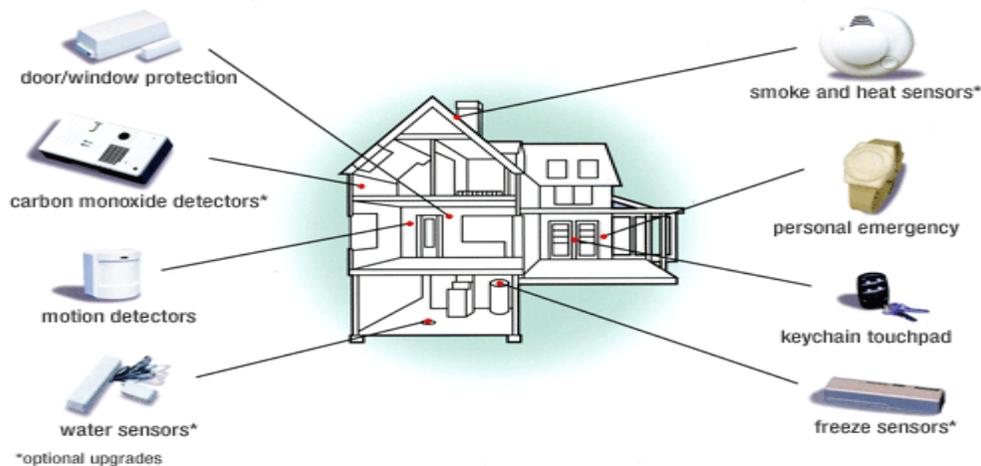
Talk with your neighbors and friends. Explain that you would like to start a Neighborhood Watch group and ask them to participate in taking the first steps in starting a Neighborhood Watch program.



SECURITY ALARMS

Installing an alarm and electronic security system in your home or business is an added defense against intruders. A security alarm can act as a deterrent to burglaries and thefts because burglars do

not want to waste time trying to defeat a burglar alarm. The sounds of an audible alarm will most likely scare a burglar way before he is able to complete his crime.



Quality alarm systems are not always cheap but no matter how good the system is it must be installed properly by competent installation personnel. Remember no system is completely foolproof. Experience burglars are so quick they can break into a home and be gone with thousands of dollars in merchandise in a matter of minutes, before the police can arrive. Burglars have defeated some alarms by cutting the power supply or phone line. Be sure to ask the alarm company what features are available that can ensure that this does not happen. The City Of Grapevine requires that all individuals, homeowners, businesses, and corporations using an alarm system in the city will be required to secure a permit from the Police Department prior to the operation of such system. Currently the alarm permit fee is \$25.00. Permit applications can be obtained at the Police Department or from <http://www.grapevinetexas.gov/IndividualDepartments/Police.aspx>

AUTO THEFT/CAR BURGLARY

A vehicle is stolen every 19 seconds in the United States and in recent years, over 1,600,000 vehicles were stolen.



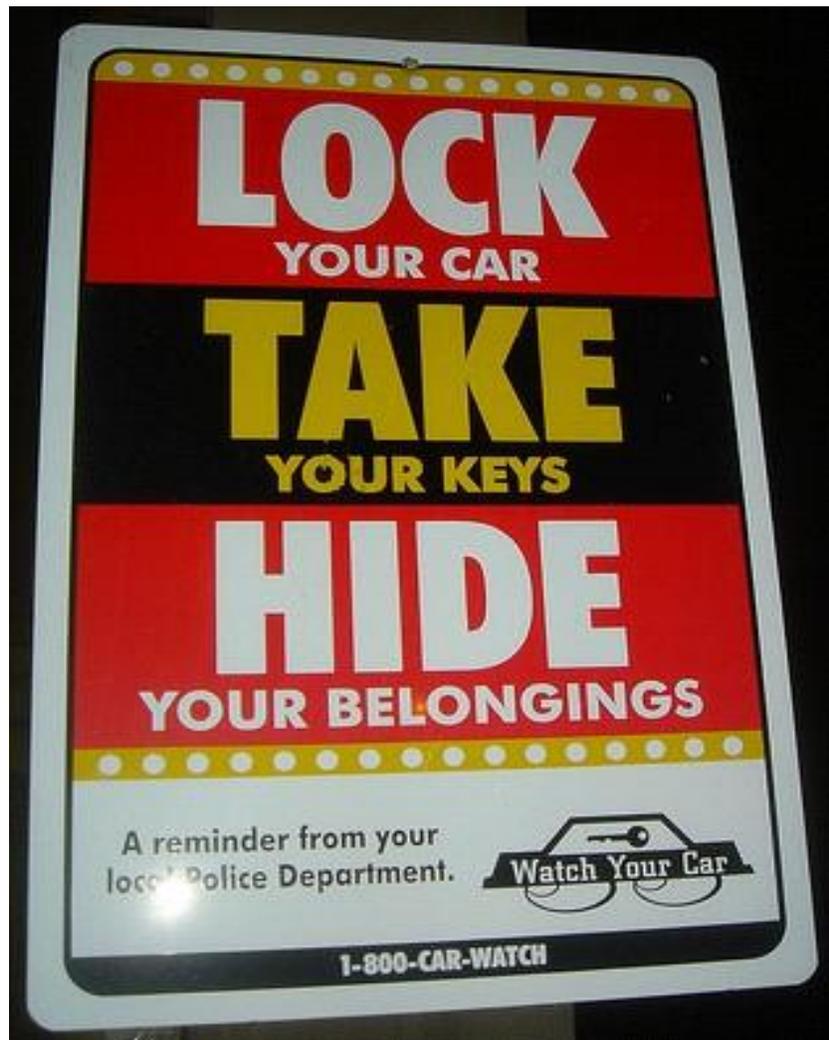
Stolen cars, vans, trucks, and motorcycles, cause economic hardships for victims, increases premiums, and may be used to commit other violent crimes.

Vehicle theft can happen any place and at anytime. A few common sense steps can help you avoid being a victim.

Never leave your vehicle running unattended.

- **Never leave your keys in the car.**
- **Never leave valuables in plain view, even if your car is locked. Put them in the trunk or out of sight.**
- **Leave just the ignition key with the attendant, if you park in a commercial garage or lot. Make sure no identifying information is attached. Do the same when you take your car for repairs.**

- **Carry your registration and insurance card with you. Don't leave personal identification documents or credit cards in your vehicle.**
- **Copy your license plate and vehicle identification number (VIN) on a card and keep them with your driver's license. If your vehicle is stolen the police will need this information.**



WWW.CRIMEREPORTS.COM

The Grapevine Police Department participates in www.crimereports.com, which is the world leader in online crime mapping; you can access crime data from nearly 700 law enforcement partners across North America and sex offender data for all 50 states. Using an interactive map CrimeReports.com will let you know what types of crimes have occurred and where they occurred.

From the [crimereports.com](http://www.crimereports.com) homepage, you select Texas and then using the scroll down menu select Grapevine. At this point you have the option of listing a specific address, or street. Once here you can access data on crime type, date, and area. Using the scroll down menus, you choose the crime data you would like more information about. For Grapevine, when selecting area, the city of Grapevine is broken down into 9 districts. Once a district is selected, click done and that portion of the city is highlighted on the interactive map. Then using the crime type and calendar dropdown menus you can narrow or expand your search to adjust the data you would like more information about. This can also be setup so you can receive an e-mail notification if a crime is reported in your neighborhood or region of interest.

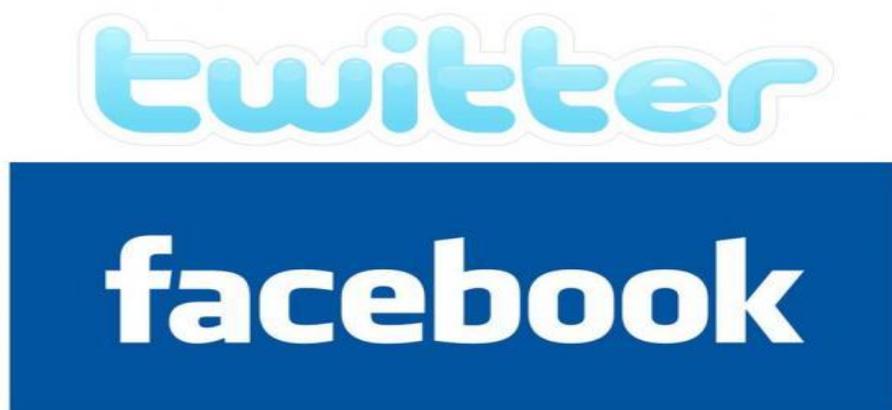


FILE POLICE REPORTS ON LINE

Also you can now **file police reports on line** by visiting the City of Grapevine Website <http://www.grapevinetexas.gov/>. Under on line services, you just click file a police report. You can use this web-site to report crimes that do not require an immediate visit by one of your Grapevine patrol officers. We are not accepting reports of stolen identity, guns, vehicles or license plates.

The types of reports that can be reported on line include the following.

Animal Ordinance Violation or Complaint	An incident involving an animal that is not an emergency.
Burglary of vending machine	Burglary of a vending machine that meets the following conditions: no suspects and no evidence.
Criminal Mischief/Vandalism/Disorderly Conduct	Reckless or malicious behavior that causes discomfort or annoyance to others might constitute Criminal Mischief.
Harassing phone calls	Use of obscene or threatening language, heavy breathing, silence or repeated unwanted phone calls over telecommunications systems in an effort to intimidate or otherwise harass.
Lost Property	Select this report type if you need to report lost property.
Reckless Driving	Your report of reckless driving will help us determine where our officers should patrol.
Other Theft(no firearms/license plates)	Theft or burglary not otherwise listed.
Vehicle Burglary(Theft from your Auto)	This occurs when your automobile is broken into and something is taken.



The Grapevine Police Department recently created an Official Facebook Page and Twitter account to connect with people in the community regarding neighborhood-level public safety and community events using the latest innovative technology. The information is disseminated in real time through instant Facebook & Twitter messages in the form of text messages, emails and web access similar to Nixle. Facebook and Twitter accounts are free to consumers as well.



Become a Fan of the Official Grapevine Police Department Facebook Page.



The Grapevine Police Department is committed to serving the citizens of Grapevine through a cooperative working relationship between the police and the people they serve. The success of solving crime lies in the actions of the citizens who have knowledge of, or view these criminal acts. With your help, we can all strive to make Grapevine, Texas a safer place to live and play.

iWatchGrapevine is a community awareness program that educates the community about suspicious activities & criminal behaviors. iWatchGrapevine focuses on criminal behavior and criminal enterprises that could also indicate a nexus to terrorist activities. Citizens are provided a convenient reporting method to provide tips and leads to police concerning crime that is affecting their community.

iWatchGrapevine allows our citizens to harness the communication capabilities of the internet/social networking sites to report crime tips and leads. This site will be a new and innovative tool to increase our community wide effort to reduce crime.

Visit <http://www.iwatchgrapevine.com/> for more information or to get started.

Anyone with questions may contact the following Crime Prevention Officers:

Officer Sam Shemwell at 817 410 3209

Officer Jason Keller at 817-421-2192

Officer Scott Rhodes at 972-724-2126

Sgt. Dale Roath at 817-410-3206

or

Email us at crimeprevention@grapevintexas.gov