

# SANTA CLARA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE



## Residential Security Survey

West Valley Patrol Division  
1601 S. De Anza Blvd STE 148  
Cupertino, CA 95014  
(408) 868-6600 [www.sccsheriff.org](http://www.sccsheriff.org)

No house is absolutely burglar-proof if professional burglars are set on getting in. They would be the first to admit that you can discourage burglars if you tighten up your home security. You can begin this process by identifying weak areas and fixing them.

The checklist below will assist you in systematically surveying your home and your practices. Every "No" check mark shows a weak point. As you eliminate the "No" check marks, you improve your protection. Any security measure you decide upon must ensure ease of escape from a room, home or yard in case of a fire or other emergency. All things, including your personal lifestyle should be weighed in your decision-making process.

Remember that this survey will only identify some of your weak areas. You have not improved your home security until these areas are corrected. Complying with these suggestions will not guarantee that your home will never be burglarized, but it will certainly make it more difficult for burglars and improve your protection. Some of the measures are listed under the most logical heading (Windows, Doors, Exterior, etc.) though it may apply to more than one area. Please read entire survey for best results.

The Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office also provides personal Security Surveys as a public service. These surveys are intended to provide basic security precautions and are not a substitute for professional security consultants particular to your commercial and or personal loss exposures. To set up an appointment for a Personal Security Survey, please send an email to [SHF.WVAdmin@shf.sccgov.org](mailto:SHF.WVAdmin@shf.sccgov.org) or call (408) 868-6600.

It is important take a critical look at your home security every three to four months. Do not become lax - crime prevention is a continuous process.

This residential security survey has been prepared to give recommendations for making your residence safe and secure. Although none of these recommendations are guaranteed to stop crime, they are an important step in reducing the potential to you, and your home from becoming victims of crime.

The Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office also offers many different crime prevention brochures and pamphlets and literature on crime prevention.

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YES	NO	CHILD SAFETY AT HOME
		Will you be home or will there be other responsible adult supervision for your children?
		Do you have smoke detectors on all the floors in your home, and do they work?
		If guns are on the premises, are they stored & locked safely? And ammunition locked separately?
		Are prescription drugs, alcohol, and other medicines or vitamins locked up?
		Are all cleaning supplies, chemicals, matches, and flammable liquids properly stored?
		Do you have a fire escape plan and have you practiced with family members?
		Will someone monitor the children's use of the Internet/and or telephone?
		Are 9-1-1 and other emergency numbers posted by the phone?
		Have you trained your children how to handle someone at the door?
		Have you trained your kids to lock doors and windows?
		Do you show by example what you want your kids to do? (Actions speak louder than words)
		Do your children know what to do in an emergency?

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YES	NO	EXTERIOR OF THE HOME
		Are entry areas unobstructed by shrubbery and other décor to permit maximum visibility by your neighbors?
		Are your trees and shrubs trimmed to eliminate hiding places?
		Are plants cut below windowsill level, and no more than 2 feet tall?
		Are lighting fixture protective-lenses vandal-resistant?
		Have you made sure that low mounted lighting cannot be compromised by simply unscrewing a bulb?
		Are lights installed around the perimeter of the home?
		Are lights installed around the perimeter of the home controlled by photocell or motion detector?
		Do the front, back or side porch lights illuminate equal more than a 60 Watt bulb?
		Is your house number illuminated and easily visible from the street during all hours of the day?
		Do you also have street numbers on the curb?
		Have you made it more difficult for the burglar by locking up your ladder, cutting tree limbs, avoiding trellises, sheds and drain pipes that can be used as a ladder for access to the second floor or roof?
		Have you taken your name(s) off the outside of your home?
		Are telephone and power lines to the home located high enough so they are not easily accessible?
		Are electrical switch boxes secured?
		Are your side gates kept locked when not in use?

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		Do you have a locking mailbox?
		Do you lock auxiliary buildings on your property when not in use?
		Are all areas around your home lighted, so intruders could not get concealment?
		Privacy fences make it easy for a thief to gain entry unseen by neighbors, if you have one, have you taken other precautions such as an alarm system?
		Do you regularly do security maintenance around your home, i.e. – make sure lights are working, cutting back tree limbs etc.

YES	NO	WINDOWS
		Are all windows equipped with auxiliary locks or pinned?
		Have you replaced or secured louvered windows?
		Are your window locks properly and securely mounted?
		Do you keep your windows locked when they are shut?
		Do you have good, secure locks on garage windows?
		Do you have garage windows covered with curtains or blinds?
		Are you as careful of basement and second floor windows as you are of those on the first floor?
		Are window air conditioners anchored and protected by steel grillwork to prevent removal from the outside?
		Can windows left open for ventilation be secured?
		Have screws been installed in the tracks of horizontal sliding glass windows?
		Have crank handles been removed from casement windows?

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YES	NO	DOORS
		Do doors fit tightly within their door frames?
		Have you changed the locks or have had them re-keyed since the last tenant?
		Do all locks work smoothly?
		Does the deadbolt extend sufficiently into the strike plate/door jamb?
		Do you have an alarm system?
		Is the alarm system monitored?
		Does the alarm system cover perimeter windows and doors as well as motion?
		Do you plan so that you do not need to "hide" a key under the doormat or similar place?
		Do you know everyone who has a key to your house? (So they are not in the possession of previous owners or previous friends)
		Are your exterior doors of solid core construction?
		Do entry doors have at least a 190 degree wide-angle viewer?
		Do exterior doors have cylinder type dead bolt locks with at least a 1" throw and beveled cylinder guard?
		Are the door strike plates (the jamb fastening device that receives the bolt in the locking position) installed with screws that at least penetrate the door jamb 3 inches?
		Can all of your doors (basement, porch, French or balcony) be securely locked?
		Do your basement doors have locks that allow you to isolate that part of your house?
		Are all your locks, door frames and doors in good repair and able to withstand excessive force?
		If the hinge pins are on the outside, are they non-removable?

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		Have screws been installed in the tracks of sliding glass doors, especially if they do not have an auxiliary locking mechanism?
		Do all out-swinging doors have locking pins or non-removable hinges with pins?
		Do sliding doors have an auxiliary lock that locks both the door panels together? Or do you have a lock that locks the active side to the frame?
		Can the overhead garage door be secured with a padlock, hasp or other auxiliary lock?
		Do you lock your garage doors whenever they are not in use?
		Does the overhead door have a track pad lock?
		Do you lock your garage door leading into the house?
		Do you lock your car and take the keys out even when it is parked in your garage or driveway?
		If you have an animal door, can it be locked?
		Are you careful not to leave garage door openers in vehicles parked outside?
		Are all exterior accessible doors equipped with dead bolts?
		If there are glass panels in or near the doors are they reinforced in some way so that they cannot be shattered?
		Does the sliding glass door have a strong, working key lock?

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YES	NO	AWAY FROM HOME
		Do you leave discreetly so a casual observer would not be able to tell you are leaving?
		Do you arrange for trusted neighbors or friends to pick up newspapers, mail packages and other deliveries?
		Do you notify a trusted neighbor to watch your residence?
		Did you leave your work or vacation addresses and telephone number with a trusted neighbor so you can be reached in case of an emergency?
		Do you arrange to keep your landscaping maintained?
		Do you use timing devices to turn your lamps, radios or televisions on and off?
		Do you tell whoever is watching your home about your timing devices?
		Do you leave some shades up or curtains open so the house doesn't look deserted, yet not creating too much visibility?
		Do you leave shades, blinds and lighting at "normal" (for your home) levels?
		If you have call forwarding, did you have your calls forwarded to a trusted friend or relative?
		Are you careful not to tell people your schedule if there is no need for them to know?
		Do you make sure you do not change your voicemail message to indicate you are away?
		Do you make sure to not give your vacation schedule or dates out via social media?
		Do you make sure that there is nothing different with the appearance of your home when you are gone that would indicate you are gone?
		Do you take the garage door opener, purse, wallet or anything with your name and address out of your vehicle?

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YES	NO	AWAY FROM HOME / AND OTHER ISSUES
		Do you hide garbage cans or invite a neighbor to put trash in them so it looks like you are home, and place them and remove them from the street on collection day?
		Do you park a car half-way down your driveway so it looks like someone is home, and makes it harder for a thief to load up goods?
		Do you not utilize the "away from the office" feature on your email?
		Do you use a safety deposit box?
		Do you not keep keys easily accessible in your home to the casual guest/burglar?
		Do you not put valuables in an obvious spot? (i.e. – master bedroom, jewelry box)
		Did you change your alarm code so it does not have the manufacturer's or previous owner's code as a viable option anymore?
		Do you retrieve your mail as soon as possible, and not leave outgoing mail to be picked up – especially with the flag raised?
		Do you make sure you remove flyers from your front door so it looks like you are home?
		Do you keep a list of all valuable property? And, do you keep this list in a safe place?
		Do you have a list of the serial numbers of your watches, cameras, computers and similar items?
		Have you engraved items of value, such as electronic equipment?
		Do you have a detailed description (or photos) of other valuables that do not have serial numbers?
		Do you avoid unnecessary display or publicity of your valuables?
		Do you keep excess cash and other valuables in a bank?

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		Have you told your family what to do if they discover a burglar breaking in or already in the house?
		Have you told your family to leave the house undisturbed and call the sheriff or police if they discover a burglary has been committed?
		Do you have emergency telephone numbers listed by or on your phone?
		Do you have a security closet with a solid core door, pinned hinges and deadbolt lock?
		Do you know your neighbors?
		Do you belong to an official Neighborhood Watch Program?
		Do you give out personal information only when necessary?
		Do you shred personal information when no longer needed?
		Do you only open the door to people you know?
		Do you test your smoke and burglar alarms?
		Do you put away valuables, including bikes?
		Do you have a phone with numbers that light up?
		Do you have emergency supplies on hand for fire, earthquakes or power outages?
		Do you have a landline phone in your home?
		Do you have more than just a portable phone in your home?
		Are you listed in the phone book?
		Do you not mention confidential issues in front of your children, where they might share sensitive information with someone who could use that information against you?
		If you have firearms, are they unloaded and locked safely away?
		If you have firearms do you keep this information confidential?

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		Are your firearms registered?
		Are grills, lawn-mowers, and other valuables stored in a locked garage or shed, or if left out in the open, are hidden from view with a tarp and securely locked to a stationary point?
		Are your bikes always locked even if in a secured garage?
		Do you keep a record of serial numbers for your personal property (bikes/computers/tablets/electronic devices)?