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Category: Additional Home Security Products

Subcategory: Additional Home Security Products

Tip: Voice Warning Systems Alert Households to Fire

The most vulnerable members of your family may be the least likely to get out of the house when there is fire. Recent studies show that smoke alarms may fail to awaken children, whose sleeping patterns are deeper than those of adults. But don't conclude that smoke alarms are unnecessary. They are your first warning to fire or smoke danger in the home. Consider instead a vocal recording that is part of your smoke detector system. The vocal warning sounds along with the beeping noise of the smoke alarm. It can be the recorded voice of a parent telling everyone to leave the house immediately because of fire. Initial studies show that sleeping children are more likely to rouse and respond to the familiar sound of a mother or father's voice. The automated warning systems should be part of an overall fire escape plan for your family. If you have not done so already, develop a plan and conduct drills, just like schools and workplaces do. The drills should teach every family member how to respond in a fire emergency and show the best evacuation routes.

Category: Burglary Statistics

Subcategory: Burglary Statistics

Tip: Alarms Mean The Difference Between Daylight Savings & Losses

Of the residential burglaries reported in 2006, a staggering 63.1 percent occurred during the daytime. These numbers debunk a common misconception that homes get broken into mostly at night. During the day, while you are at work and your kids are at school, your home is most vulnerable. With no one at home to deter a break-in, a burglar alarm is more necessary than ever. Crime statistics show that this is the target time period for residential break-ins, while nighttime is when more businesses are broken into after closing. So don't get lulled into not arming your security system during the day. Burglary statistics have proven homes are targeted more during these hours because people are not home and do not expect daytime break-ins. If there is no one home always set the alarm for your home safety. With a 1.3 percent increase in burglaries from the previous year and 2/3 of the total number of offenses committed on residences, there is a lot of room for more homes to be hit during daylight. The time when most people think a home is safest is when criminals see them as most vulnerable.

Tip: Cover All The Bases By Protecting Windows And Doors

Boarded-up or cracked windows are an easy target for burglars; they are practically

open invitations. That is why Protect America security systems include sensors for all of your windows and doors, including garage doors. With their packages, every point of entrance is protected. The types of sensors include devices that will alert you when a door/window is opened, sensors that detect if glass has been broken, or ones that detect a temperature drop in your home signifying an open point of entry. So if a window or door breaks get it fixed right away. Do not cover it with plastic or wooden boards for extended periods of time. Leaving windows and doors exposed dramatically lowers your home safety and shows vulnerability. Burglar alarms can cover every possible way into your house a criminal might try to exploit. A broken window is vulnerable, but an intact one with sensors is not. A sensor on every window and door leaves a thief with no option but to move on or get caught. Make sure you secure all of these access points, even ones on upper levels of your home. Ground level entrances are not the only ones that should be protected.

Category: Child Safety

Subcategory: Home Safety

Tip: Ideas for a Safety Starter Kit

Here is a list of items offered in a Child Safety Starter Kit. You don't actually have to buy the kit to get great ideas about where to start when child proofing your home. Think about protecting each of these areas: * Sponge Tape for Sharp Edges * Grippy Tub/Shower Stickers * Bath Thermometer * Glass Door Stickers * CPR/Choking Fridge Magnet * Door Stops * Outlet Plugs * Drawer Latches * VCR Lock * Door Knob Grips * Cabinet Flex Lock * Door finger Guards * Appliances Latches * Corner Cover * Cord Wind-Ups * Babysitter Guide Book * Stove Knob Covers * Cabinet Slide Lock * Two Touch Outlet Covers * Complete Instruction Booklet

Category: Emergency Panic Buttons

Subcategory: Emergency Panic Buttons

Tip: Use Key Chain Remotes With Your Alarm System

A key chain remote control for your security system can be useful in several settings. Being able to arm and disarm the system remotely with a single push of a button allows for flexibility otherwise not found in traditional systems. You can disarm your security alarm when walking to the door or pulling into your driveway/garage and reactivate it once you are inside. The best feature of this device, however, is the personal panic button. Panic buttons are not just for medical emergencies, though they are important in these situations as well. Let's say as you're pulling into your driveway a carjacker tries

to assault you and steal your car; the wireless panic button is at your fingertips even before you are inside the house. If a burglar approaches you at the door before you have time to shut it, you do not need to run to the command station. You already have a remote in your hands. Hit the panic button and trigger your alarm system to scare the burglar off. As we touched on before, medical emergencies are the most common reasons for the panic button to be used on remotes. If you experience a medical emergency before you reach the door and cannot get to a phone, the panic button could save your life. Key chain remotes satisfy both convenience and safety.

Category: Fire & Carbon Monoxide Safety

Subcategory: Fire & Carbon Monoxide Safety

Tip: Where To Place Smoke/Co2 Detectors

Smoke and carbon monoxide detectors have to be placed strategically around the house if you want them to be as effective as possible in protecting your family. While the minimum recommendation is one of each for every floor, the truth is more are needed to completely safeguard a home. You would not expect the same amount of food for one child to feed two adults, so it is not reasonable to think that one smoke detector that covers a house with four rooms can do the same job for a house with 12. If you want to maximize your fire and carbon monoxide safety there should be a detector in every bedroom, especially a child's room. Offices with computers, living rooms with home entertainment centers, and other areas with a lot of electronics and wiring should have detectors as well. Electronics can sometimes surge or overheat and start fires, so installing detectors in these areas is smart. Avoid placing smoke detectors in areas where you might get regular false alarms, like directly over an oven. Heat detectors, which sense steep rises in temperature, should also not be put near ovens, clothes dryers, or bathrooms where taking a hot shower could accidentally set them off.

Category: Flood Protection

Subcategory: Flood Protection

Tip: Compare Flood Sensors Before Buying

When you shop for a flood or water sensor, compare the features of different brands. Essential functions can vary, such as the depth of water measured or whether the sensor can be connected to an existing home alarm. Here is a checklist of features to shop for: Reliability and years of maintenance-free service. Go online to check customer ratings for products you are considering. Compatibility. If you already have a home security system, shop for a water or flood sensor that will hook up to your home alarm. If

you are unsure, check with the dealer where you bought your alarm system. Either the company will have a compatible product or know where to find one. Effectiveness. Look for a sensor that can detect water overflow or flooding right when it happens. Some sensors use a thin adhesive strip that can detect water under carpets. High level of protection. Some products let you connect several sensors — in the kitchen, basement, laundry room — to one alarm.

State-of-the-art alarm. You may want to choose an alarm that will sound for several hours or even days if there is a problem.

Convenience. Look for a flood sensor that has easy DIY installation.

Tip: Flood Sensor, Sump Pump Alarm Alerts You to Rising Water

There are a variety of water sensors available to meet the needs of your household. These products are readily available at many home stores, online or through your home security dealer.

Connect a flood sensor to an existing home alarm system. Place it in areas where you are concerned about water overflow, such as next to a washing machine.

A wireless sump-pump alarm and flood alert will let you know if your sump pump is failing. This combo comes with a six-foot long sensor and a water-sensing probe you place in the sump crock. The battery-powered alarm stays dry with a wall-mount anchor.

A wireless flood-freeze warning flasher has a portable receiver that can be placed anywhere, or given to a neighbor to monitor when you are away. The signal range can be up to 120 feet. Remote sensors have dual functions. They detect flooding in your home, as well as indoor temperatures falling below 45 degrees.

Tip: Upgrade Home Security with Flood and Temperature Alerts

When you buy home security, consider a national company that offers brand-name products and warranties. Expect to have your system for years. You want to choose a company that will provide the service and upgrades you need. National companies also are likely to offer the latest innovations and accessories in home security. Services by home security companies have broadened significantly. Protection is no longer just about hooking up to a burglary alarm. Look for these other product innovations: Flood sensors that use wireless technology to detect leaks and flooding in your home before it becomes a crisis. Medical panic pendants that can be worn around the neck and summon help with a single push of the button. Low-temperature sensors that alert a monitoring facility when your home drops to chilly levels that can burst pipes. Monitored carbon monoxide detectors that notify 24-hour responders when levels are dangerous.

Tip: Water Sensors Can Be Placed Under Appliances

The great thing about a water sensor is how useful it is. Some can detect a fraction of an inch of water overflow on the floor and sound an alarm or tone to let you know. Here are places you can put water sensors: Under the bathroom sink, where leaks can cause

water damage to cabinets or flooring. Next to the water heater to detect early signs of leaks and save you money. Under refrigerators, dishwashers and washing machines. Catch leaks before they damage your floors and prevent the unhealthy growth of mold. In your basement. Put sensors in areas where you think water will collect.

Category: General Home Security Tips

Subcategory: General Home Security Tips

Tip: Assess Your Need for Home Security

Most people need some level of home security to keep themselves, their family and their belongings safe. But is a home security system right for you? Studies indicate homes are safer with security systems. Not only do they provide swift warning of intruders, they deter criminals from trying to enter your home in the first place. Think about reports you read in the newspaper or heard on TV about burglaries, home invasions, even abductions. There likely was no mention of a security alarm. Residents were caught off guard. They did not know someone was breaking into their home. Here are the top reasons people add home security systems: Family protection. Fear for personal safety. Safeguard valuables. Peace of mind.

Tip: Insurers May Discount Premiums for Homes with Security

Who knows better about the risks of home ownership than insurance companies? Insurance companies are so confident in the effectiveness of home security systems that they typically discount the cost of coverage after owners or renters install a quality system. Ask your home security system dealer to provide a certificate as proof your new protection package. Expect up to a 10 percent discount for a simple burglar alarm system and deadbolt locks, though discounts vary by insurer. Discounts can rise up to 20 percent if you have a monitored security system. Also ask your insurer about potential discounts for installing smoke detectors and sprinklers. Check with your insurer to make sure you are getting the discounts you currently qualify for and to learn about additional discounts when you add or upgrade a security system.

Tip: Prevent Burglaries Before They Happen

Whether you live in a castle or cabin, there is no guarantee you always will be safe. If you worry a lot about personal safety, it may be time to enhance home security and provide the sense of comfort you need. Here are some tips to help you secure your home: The best security is prevention. Make your home unwelcome to intruders. Criminals are opportunists. Studies show they are more likely to bypass your house if there are barriers and risks to gaining entry. Improving outdoor lighting, trimming shrubbery, and owning a dog that barks at disturbances can help. But to be truly safe,

consider a monitored home security system that offers oversight of your home 24/7. Monitored security systems are designed to detect the first sign of danger, and take quick action to alert local authorities. Security companies provide customers with signs and stickers to post on windows and at entryways, so would-be intruders know their movements will be noticed and they may be caught.

Tip: Take Precautions at Home When Leaving for Vacation

Protect your home from burglars when you are on vacation by disguising the fact that you are away. Follow these simple steps to securing your personal belongings and keeping your home safe: Put your TV or radio on a timer, so it automatically goes on and off at key times during the day and night. Stop newspaper and mail delivery, so papers and postal items do not pile up on your porch. This is an obvious sign that no one has been home for days. Ask a neighbor to watch your house. Better yet, hire a house sitter -- a trusted student or senior, for example -- to stay at your home and earn some extra cash to keep a watch on things. In the winter, make sure someone shovels the snow from your walkway. Summers, don't let the lawn grow out of control while you're away. Leave an extra car parked in the driveway. Don't leave a recorded message on your phone at home that you are out of town. Your message at work should simply say you are out of the office. Don't close all the blinds and curtains, as if you are not at home. If you have a housekeeper who comes weekly, consider asking him or her to come the week or weeks you are away. The housekeeper's presence is another sign that someone is home.

Category: Glass Break Sensors

Subcategory: Glass Break Sensors

Tip: Add Security to All Windows Accessible from the Outside

When adding home security, install sensors and glass break detectors on windows that can be accessed easily from outside. Of course, you can bypass third-story windows. But if someone can climb through second-floor windows from a fire escape or tree limb, you may want to secure them as well. Glass windows should be protected with both a sensor and a glass break detector. The sensor activates an alarm if the window opens and someone tries to enter. The glass break detector will pick up low and high frequency sounds of glass breaking. Both the detector and sensor will send a signal to the control panel of your security system, which sounds an alarm. A monitored system will signal a professional responder who can dispatch police.

Tip: Charlie Bars Protect Sliding Glass Doors

Sliding doors can be easy for thieves to enter. They can force open the lock with a

screw driver or simply lift the door off its tracks. Swing-down aluminum bars called "Charlie bars" offer protection. They have a pin lock to secure them against the back of the sliding door. With a Charlie bar, the only way a burglar can get in is to break the glass. For optimum security, add a glass break detector, which will activate an alarm the moment the glass is broken.

Tip: Glass Break Detectors Enhance Home Security

Window sensors are a basic component of home security packages. They activate an alarm when someone opens a window and tries to enter your house. But they don't offer complete protection. For that, you also need a glass break detector. An acoustic glass break detector triggers an alarm when the window breaks. It "hears" the frequency sounds of glass breaking. An alternative is a shock glass break detector that is mounted on the window and "feels" the shock of breaking glass. There also is a new kind of detector that uses dual technology, or a combination of both. There are advantages of adding a glass break detector to your home security package, no matter which technology you choose. It activates an alarm as soon as someone outside breaks the glass, even though the intruder has yet to enter your home. The sound of the burglar alarm may be enough to send the burglar away. If you have a monitored alarm system, your monitoring service will be notified and summon help.

Tip: Look for Dual Technology in Glass Break Detectors

Look for glass break detectors that "hear" both high and low frequency sounds. Otherwise, you may get a lot of false alarms. The dual technology listens for an object hitting and flexing the glass, followed by the high sound of breaking glass. When it "hears" the two sounds, in that order, the alarm activates. Sometimes alarm companies use single technology because it is cheaper. But a single technology alarm sometimes mistakes other noises for breaking glass, like music playing, lightning strikes, even someone sneezing. Dual technology ends those problems and allows for a much more sensitive device.

Category: Home Automation

Subcategory: Home Automation

Tip: Night Vision Cameras

Home automation products like outdoor cameras have become very popular in recent years. Wireless home security systems use these devices as a way to protect homes whenever a threat presents itself. Whether activated by motion or a timer, they provide a convenience and sense of security at the same time. Some outdoor security cameras can now automatically switch to night vision recording in the evening, providing clearer

recordings at night. These can help to identify burglars in dark areas and assist police in apprehending them. Not all cameras have this capability and the ones that do may be a little more expensive. Ask your Alarm company if they have models with this function or what other manufacturers make models that are compatible with your system. Wireless home automation can control everything from security cameras and lights to household appliances and home entertainment centers. They can give the impression that someone is home as a deterrent, or they can sound an alarm to scare a thief away before he or she can break into your house.

Tip: Timing Is Everything

Outdoor cameras and lights are important parts of home automated security systems, but they do not need to be on 24 hours a day. Manually turning each component on every day can be an inconvenience, but luckily there are ways around this problem. By setting these devices on automated timers or motion detectors, your cameras and lights will turn on when they are needed without you having to do it yourself. Choose the timer option and your outdoor security components will turn on at the same time each day no matter what. If you go with motion detectors, your lights and cameras will turn on whenever movement is detected within the perimeter of your wireless security system. Since equipment based on motion sensors will only turn on when there is movement in a protected zone, you may not notice malfunctions or problems with equipment right away. That is why it is important to test these devices once a week to make sure that they are in working order and will turn on when they are supposed to. The last thing you want is for them to fail when you need them the most. Whether you use timers or motion sensors, both your home security and convenience are maximized while your house's vulnerability fades away.

Category: Keeping Kids Safe

Subcategory: Keeping Kids Safe

Tip: Keeping Your Kids Safe At Home

Children tend to get bitten by the curiosity bug, grabbing everything they can reach, climbing on anything bigger than they are and chewing on things that are not always edible. Child-proofing your house is the best way to ensure you are keeping your kids safe. Here are some ways to do that. Use child safety gates to block doorways to rooms that your kids should not be allowed into unsupervised. Place child locks on drawers and cabinets, especially ones that hold silverware or glasses. Make sure any prescription medication bottles in the house have child-proof caps on them. Use plastic stoppers to cover up electrical outlets so children cannot touch them. Keep cleaning products and other chemicals out of the reach of children. Whenever possible, keep home security system components throughout the house out of a child's reach so they

cannot hurt themselves or damage the security alarms. These are all ways to keep your kids safe from potential dangers inside the house. To protect them from outside dangers use security alarms that will prevent burglars from breaking into your home.

Tip: Making Children Feel Safe In the Neighborhood

It is important to make sure that child safety extends beyond the home and into the entire neighborhood. That's why you should make sure that your children know and are comfortable with your neighbors. In case of an emergency they should be able to go to a neighbor's house. If a burglar attempts to break in while your children are home they should have a place where they feel safe. Come up with a family plan for what to do in instances like this and make sure you are keeping your kids safe. This plan should include the following: Where to go Numbers to call Entrances/exits in the house to use Remember to periodically review these things with your children so they know what to do should the need arise. Make sure to teach them early on important emergency contact numbers, including 911, neighbors, family members, etc. Let them know when it is appropriate to use these numbers.

Category: Keeping Teens Safe

Subcategory: Keeping Teens Safe

Tip: Internet Safety Is Part Of Home Safety

Internet use is a big part of home safety. Any computer in your home connected to the Internet could be targeted by hackers looking to steal personal information. This includes information about your home security system. Never store password information and other sensitive materials about your burglar alarm system on a computer. All of this data should be on hard copies (paper) and stored inside your home. With chat rooms and instant messaging so popular these days, make sure that your kids do not share any of this information with people over the Internet. There are also parental locks that can be used on computers to stop kids from viewing sites that do not meet your approval or attempt to retrieve information from your hard drive. The Internet is a vast source of information and content, but not all of it is appropriate for your kids. Home safety extends to the computer, so make sure the time your teenager spends on the Internet is productive and does not negatively impact their safety or the safety of your house.

Tip: Knowing Your Kids' Friends & Their Parents

As your kids become teenagers and delve into high school the number of other kids they meet skyrockets. Sometimes it may even seem like a revolving door of new friends, boyfriends and girlfriends. Part of keeping teens safe is keeping track of who

their friends are and who their friends' parents are. If their parents often leave them unsupervised at home than that means your teen might be unsupervised while at their house. You work hard to make sure your kids are safe in your own home and you want them to be safe when they're in someone else's house too. Do they have a home security system? Are there smoke and Co2 detectors in the house? Knowing how seriously they take their own home security and the safety of their kids will give you an idea of how safe your teen is with them. If you are not satisfied with the security of a friend's home, have your kids bring them to your house instead. This way you know that they are supervised by adults and are safe in your house. Home safety for kids should be just as important to other parents as it is to you.

Category: Keeping Windows Secure

Subcategory: Keeping Windows Secure

Tip: Reinforced Glass

In order to improve your home security consider replacing your existing windows and glass doors with reinforced glass. These make it much harder for a burglar to break and get into your home. There are several different types of reinforced glass that can dramatically improve your safety. Some manufactures use wire mesh embedded in the panes so they cannot be broken through like a normal window. Even if the window breaks, the wire and a lot of broken glass still stands between the burglar and your home (and of course your alarm system). Others use what are referred to as glass bricks. These are thick and very difficult to break. They also allow light to pass through into your home while preventing people outside from seeing in. If a would-be thief cannot see into your home they are not able to see something they might want to steal. Some other common methods of reinforcing glass doors and windows involve using carbon fiber or vinyl materials in the construction process. These types of glass make your house nearly impenetrable, requiring far more time and effort than your average burglar is willing to put in. They are a perfect complement to a home security alarm that protects windows as well as all other areas of your home. Notify your security company about these types of windows beforehand so they can walk you through the best alarm options to go with your windows.

Tip: Sweating the Heat & the Thief

Trying to stay cool in the summer with an air conditioner that sits in your window? If so, the heat is not the only thing you should be thinking about. A window that is open to accommodate an air conditioner is a prime target for burglars. Not everyone has the option of central air in their homes, so these types of air conditioners are very common. The window is already open and the air conditioner can be pulled out, providing easy

access to the house. Window fans make it even easier for thieves, since they are considerably lighter weight and less of a hassle to remove. However, the proper positioning of motion detectors can solve this problem for you. Motion detectors can be placed inside to enhance window security. They will not pick up any movement outside the window, but detectors that come with Protect America alarm systems can be placed in the room where the window air conditioner is located so that if an intruder removed the air conditioning unit and entered, the motion would detect the intruder. Now you can protect yourself from the heat and protect your house from burglars at the same time. You shouldn't have to sweat the heat or the thief.

Category: Know Your Neighbors

Subcategory: Know Your Neighbors

Tip: Tenant Associations

The benefit of knowing your neighbors does not just apply to houses in the suburbs. Apartment buildings are their own kind of neighborhood. Get to know the people that live in your building. If there is a tenant association that is a perfect place to start. It is similar to a local neighborhood watch. Join the group and start attending their meetings. If there is no such organization, talk to your neighbors about starting one. Groups like this help people living in condos and apartment buildings maintain safe communities. When you know the people that live in your building it is easy to spot people who do not. Recognizing strangers in the building can prevent break-ins and other criminal activity. Unless you recognize someone as a resident, do not let the person into your building. Letting unauthorized people through the door can often lead to burglaries, vandalism and more. If access to your building is not secure, talk to your landlord about getting this resolved with stronger locks and reinforced glass or steel doors. Home alarm services for apartments are very effective, and alarm companies may provide a discount if multiple people in the same building order systems. This can net you a discount on renter's insurance and improve security at the same time.

Category: Motion Sensors

Subcategory: Motion Sensors

Tip: Combine Motion Sensors with Other Home Security Products

Motion sensors are most effective when part of a whole home security package you customize based on your protection needs. Components in a basic security package may include a control panel, keypad, window and door sensors and a siren. The sensors signal the alarm when a door or window is opened. If you want to add security

products, consider motion detectors. They sense when someone is inside your house. Protect basements or other areas not often occupied. Or activate motion detectors in living areas when you are not home.

Tip: Driveway Alarms Can Protect RVs and Boats

Driveway alarm motion detectors let you know when people or vehicles are on your property. These devices can be used to provide security at entrances, garages, driveways or barns. Use them to protect boats, RVs, trucks and mailboxes. Look for a system that includes: Passive infrared motion sensor and receiver. DIY installation. Ranges that match your need. Expect to find motion sensors with a 30-foot detection range that can send a signal 1,200 feet away to a receiver. Shields that protect the devices in rain or snow. Sound control for the tones that alert you to vehicles or people. Wireless sensors that use household batteries. Optional add-ons for more sensors.

Category: Neighborhood Watch

Subcategory: Neighborhood Watch

Tip: The Sign Says: Neighborhood Watch!

As new people move into your area it is important to let them know there is a neighborhood crime watch. It is important to make this fact known to criminals as well. By posting signs and fliers throughout the community you can attract new people to join the group and increase visibility. Burglars passing through often keep on moving when they see that such a group exists. Post these neighborhood watch signs and fliers in highly visible areas where both residents and burglars alike can see them. Here are some key places to post them. Church and recreation center bulletin boards Local grocery stores Outside local schools and daycare centers On telephone poles in major town intersections Outside the local Post Office In community shopping centers and restaurants At the local police station Make sure to include helpful information on these signs like emergency phone numbers and contact information. If your watch group has a Web site include the address. Also include upcoming meetings along with time and location so interested parties can attend and get more information.

Category: Outdoor Lighting

Subcategory: Outdoor Lighting

Tip: Don't Get Left Out In The Dark!

Outdoor security lighting can only help you if it is working properly. Make sure to check the bulbs and keep up with maintenance regularly. If you notice they are starting to dim, flicker, or give any other indication the bulb is reaching the end of its lifespan, replace it with a new one. It is better to replace the bulb early than to wait until it burns out while you are walking through your yard, leaving you standing in the dark. Keep extra bulbs around the house so you never have to go without outdoor security lights. If after changing the bulb you find that a problem persists, it could be a wiring or hardware problem. Contact the home security company you purchased it from and ask them for assistance. Do not wait to take care of issues like these. The longer you take to get on top of it the longer you go without that part of your alarm system working at full capacity. Extended warranties are very helpful in maintaining security equipment outdoors that is exposed to extreme weather conditions. Check to see what the warranty covers so you know how to take care of any problem right away.

Tip: Outdoor Lights For Driveway & Garage

The garage is like an extension of your house and should be protected as such. Burglars often look to enter a home through an attached garage. You should adhere to the same safety precautions with your driveway that you take with the path to your front door. Outdoor security lights for the garage and driveway are safeguards against break-ins, muggings and car theft. If you park your car in a driveway or garage before entering your house, exterior lighting is essential to home security. It allows you to clearly see at night and it also makes it easy for neighbors to see if someone attempts to attack you or break into the house or car. When installed, the outdoor security lights should be positioned at angles that illuminate the entire area without casting unnecessary shadows that can be used to conceal a burglar. Make sure that the lights are not positioned in such a way that your vision is impaired when exiting your car or walking toward the house. This may require a few tests at night to see what the best angles are on your property.

Tip: Timers & Motion Detector Lights

Outdoor security lights can work in several different ways with your home security system. They can be turned on manually, set on a timer, or use motion detectors. The recommended choices would be a timer or security motion detectors. With the former, your lights will turn themselves on at the same time every night. As the seasons change and the sun sets at different hours the timer can be adjusted. With this option you never have to worry about turning the lights on yourself. Even if you are not home you know the lights will be on when you get there. Motion detectors can save you a little money with your outdoor lights, turning on only when they are triggered by movement in your yard. The sensitivity and duration can usually be adjusted to fit your desires. The manual option means that you have to remember to turn the lights on every night. The downside to this is that if you are not at home the lights will be off, leaving part of your home security weakened. This also leaves you and your family vulnerable coming home

with no lighting in your yard.

Category: Securing Your Home Before Going on Vacation

Subcategory: Securing Your Home Before Going on Vacation

Tip: Call Forwarding

It has become a common and equally dangerous practice for people to change their messages on answering machines, voice-mail or e-mail letting others know they are out of town and will be away for a while. This severely weakens your security at home. If a burglar suspects that you may not be home and tries to find out by looking up your number and calling, that message can cause a lot of trouble. Now they know that no one is home and the house is ripe for the picking. Only tell the people that you trust and feel you need to notify when you are leaving your home for longer than a day. This could include family and neighborhood watch members. Let everyone else assume that you are still home. A great way to do this is call-forwarding. If your telephone service provider offers this option, you can have any calls made to your home phone forwarded directly to your cellular phone. When you answer it will give the impression that you are at home, even when you are hundreds or thousands of miles away.

Tip: Let Trusted Neighbors Know When You're Away

Everyone deserves a vacation now and then, but no one deserves to return to a home that has been burglarized. So before you board that plane, train or automobile, talk to your neighbors and neighborhood watch. Let them know where you will be and how long you will be gone. Members of the neighborhood watch can do a few extra walkthroughs on your street to make sure there is nothing suspicious going on. Your neighbors can keep an eye out to make sure no one is on your property that should not be. If you do not communicate your plans to someone they may not think it's necessary to keep an eye out for your house. By telling people you trust that you will be away for a while you can have the peace of mind that someone is looking out for your security at home. Whomever you choose to tell, be sure to also add them to your emergency contact list. That way your home's security system company can inform them of any incidents. Having a next-door neighbor or member of the crime watch on your contact list is a great way to help secure your home.

Category: Security Cameras

Subcategory: Security Cameras

Tip: Digital Video Recorders Offer Crystal Clear Playbacks

You can buy high-resolution security cameras to take the best pictures. But unless your have a quality video recorder, the playback may not look great. The new generation of digital video recorders may be your best choice. They are superior to analog recorders in several ways. DVRs can handle higher resolution videos than analog recorder can. Pair a DVR with a high resolution security camera, and the result is a sharp image on video. DVRs also offer a high frame rate that easily exceeds analog recorders. The higher rate allows for a smooth playback. It ends annoying time delays and time lapses in your video recordings. With DVRs, the quality of videos does not diminish over time. The video recording can be played back over and over without sacrificing the image quality.

Tip: Night Vision Cameras Use Infrared Technology

Night vision cameras are not the stuff of James Bond flicks. They are widely available and can be part of your home security system. With the right night-vision equipment, it is possible to see a person standing 200 yards away on a pitch-dark night. If you suspect an intruder is on your property at night, pick up the phone and dial 911. But if you also want the high-tech excitement of conducting surveillance of your property, buy a night vision camera that uses image-enhancement technology. These high-resolution cameras "see" in the dark by enhancing infrared and visible light. The cameras are computerized but rugged. They usually come with visors that protect the devices in rain or snow. But expect to pay a hefty price for a quality night vision camera. They can cost \$700 or more.

Category: Security Companies

Subcategory: Security Companies

Tip: Demand for Home Security Increases Employment Options

With increasing demand for security systems in businesses and homes, there is greater need by security companies for service professionals. The National Burglar and Fire Alarm Association -- the industry's primary organization for standards and certification -- offers the National Training School. It provides education in electronic life safety, security and systems. It makes sense to explore the educational experience offered by the National Training School, because of its connections to the national member organization and national reputation for standards. Options for training include classroom work or online instruction for selling, monitoring, installing and servicing security systems. The National Training School has provided instruction to 30,000 students since its founding in 1985. Check with the National Training School to learn about courses offered in your community.

Tip: Home Alarms Win Support of Insurance Companies

Major insurance companies encourage clients to invest in house alarms, because they can prevent burglaries. In cases where the alarm does not keep burglars from entering your home, the noise and commotion may cause them to stay a shorter time. Home insurance companies are so sure of the effectiveness of home alarms that they typically will discount coverage for households that install them. Choose a security company that offers customized packages of equipment that can secure all potential points of entry into your home. A single type of security device is unlikely to provide total protection for your home. Look for a company that offers an array of products -- window and door sensors, motion detectors, glass break detectors and monitoring services.

Tip: Shop Around When Buying Electronic Home Security

The nation's leading industry group for promoting standards for home security companies encourages consumers to shop around when buying electronic protection. The National Burglar and Fire Alarm Association not only represents the industry but also provides certification and training for professionals. It tells consumers to ask security companies about employee training, screening and certification.

Here are some other tips for choosing the right security company for your home protection:

Make sure the company has the proper state and local licenses to conduct business. Check with your local Better Business Bureau to see if any complaints have been filed against the business. Check with local police to see if they have experience dealing with the security company. Ask friends, neighbors and your local insurance agent for referrals to home security companies. If you are visited by a company representative for an appointment, ask for identification and look for a company vehicle with a logo. If you are ordering your home security package by phone or in person, ask for a quote in writing before agreeing to payment. Compare prices and offers by at least three companies before making your decision.

Category: Security for Renters

Subcategory: Security for Renters

Tip: Guards Are Not Enough

Living in an apartment building that has security guards can often lull people into thinking they do not need a home security system. If ever there was a time the old adage about not putting all your eggs in one basket applied, this is it. Even the most competent of security guards is still just human. If a burglar manages to get by a guard you are left completely vulnerable without an alarm. While we all want to live in a world where you do not have to lock your doors at night, sometimes your neighbor across the

hall is a question mark. Another tenant would not be scrutinized by security guards and it is difficult to get to know and trust every neighbor in the building. Apartment buildings often have several entrances, while individual apartments have far fewer. So even if it is easy to gain access to the building itself, it is also easy to secure your apartment. Home security alarms work just as well in an apartment as they do in houses, and your belongings are just as important. No one ever said their property was expendable because they don't live in a house. Apartment security is just as important. Security guards are like a yard sign. They are there for visibility. But a sign does you no good if there is nothing to back it up, and the same applies for security guards.

Tip: Securing Apartment Windows & Doors

A common mistake among people living in apartment buildings is failing to secure windows. You may think that you are safe because you are on the twelfth floor, but thinking like that can get you into trouble. Windows can be accessed by fire escape ladders, patios, a window from the building next door if close enough, and more. Patios with sliding glass doors are particularly vulnerable and often targeted by burglars. Protect America home alarm systems come with sensors for your windows that can detect if they are opened or if the glass breaks. Some apartments are joined by a door that has been sealed shut and is no longer in use. These can still be used by burglars to gain access to your home. Security packages come with sensors for your doors as well as windows. Place one on these types of doors as well as all the "working" entry points. Any potential access points should be secured. In apartments people often overlook these things because they do not recognize the vulnerability that they present.

Category: Security Systems

Subcategory: Security Systems

Tip: Choose an Alternative to VOIP for Home Security Monitoring

VOIP lets users make phone calls over the Internet. It is cheap to use, but can be vulnerable to hackers. VOIP is so new, that it does not have direct 911 service, and may not be super reliable. So it's no surprise that home protection companies do not recommend VOIP to link with monitored security services. Instead homeowners are advised to use a broadband Internet connection. LAN lines are the standard option. VOIP may let your security system communicate with the monitoring facility, but most home protection companies will not stand behind the connection.

Tip: Gated Communities No Substitute for Home Security

Gated communities are not a substitute for home security. Too often homeowners wrongly see gated communities and guard stations as their personal home security.

Residents develop a false sense of security. In reality, the guards routinely allow in pizza deliveries, appliance repair people and contractors. Homeowners may naively tell the staff at guard stations their vacation schedules, even though they know little about them or their associates. Teens who live in these gated communities even may be responsible for some of the burglaries or petty theft. There have been a number of cases across the nation where clusters of burglaries occurred in gated communities. Once a burglar mastered how to enter one house, others were hit. The criminal was familiar with the subdivision, and used the same method for other break-ins. Homes in gated communities often are similar in structure and design to make repeat crimes easy. Police officials say that burglar alarms provide more reliable protection than a wall around the subdivision where you live. The most secure home protection system is an electronic one with sensors that "watch" your home continually.

Category: Temperature Sensors

Subcategory: Temperature Sensors

Tip: Temperature Sensors Let You Know When There is Trouble

With the proliferation of wireless gadgets, inventors are constantly devising new ways to enhance home security -- with temperature sensors, motion sensors, shock sensors and water sensors. With temperature sensors alone, you can find variety. Just look at the ways temperature sensors communicate readings and alerts to users: Internet. Some sensors alert homeowners to swings in home temperature via the Internet. The homeowners simply needs to install software that enables him/her to connect with the home monitoring system. Phone. Temperature sensors commonly use LAN line phones to transmit readings and provide automated alerts. Monitoring Facilities. Temperature sensors connected to your master home security system will signal a monitoring facility to problems. The monitoring service will contact you and others on your emergency contact list.

Tip: Temperature Sensors Part of a Whole Home Security Plan

Today's advanced home security systems offer consumers complete control of their property's operations, including burglar alarms, smoke detectors and temperature sensors. Temperature sensors allow you to monitor the temperature in your home, even when you are miles away. If the temperature drops or exceeds a certain setting, the owner is alerted by phone. Temperature sensors are ideal for monitoring your home in the winter when you are vacationing in a warmer climate. People also use temperature sensors to monitor computer rooms, where thermostat control is vital to the computer's operations.

Category: Wireless Home Security Systems

Subcategory: Wireless Home Security Systems

Tip: Home Security Keypads Put You in Control

A keypad on your wireless home security system puts you in control. Some are mounted on walls while others are portable. Keypads enable you to turn the alarm on and off. They also may let you arm different zones in your home, or summon emergency personnel. Check out are some of the features available, depending on the model and brand you buy: Easy access for arming and disarming motion detectors. Some keypads provide one-touch ability to turn motion sensors on or off. Here's a quick tip: The best time to activate motion sensors are when you are not home, or at night downstairs when everyone in the house is upstairs sleeping. Activate the alarm with the touch of a button. This feature enables you to trigger the burglar alarm or siren while at home, if an intruder tries to enter the house. Use the keypad to test whether your system is working, program new functions, or check the status of your alarm system. Some systems offer easy-to-read, one-touch keypads for summoning local police, firefighters or EMTs. Some keypads let you add other users on your home security system, such as the babysitter or housekeeper. But you give them access, and can change or delete their security codes as needed. Some keypads feature voice response to let you know how your system is functioning.

Tip: Wired or Wireless? You Choose

Is it better to buy a wired or wireless security system? The answer: It depends. Wireless – for its convenience and affordability – is definitely the trend. But if you already have a hardwired system, it may be best to have a combination of both – a hardwired panel with a wireless receiver. The wireless receiver allows you to accessorize your system with the latest wireless security products. If you are installing a system for the first time, you can save money and time with a wireless system, which has little or no installation costs. If you can install your own home smoke detector, you can install a home security system. Wireless systems can be more vulnerable to attack by intruders, since they are so easy to operate. You may want to put the control panel in an area of your house where it is not highly visible or accessible.

Category: Yard Maintenance & Landscaping

Subcategory: Yard Maintenance & Landscaping

Tip: Gates and Fencing For Security

If your yard is surrounded by a gate or fence you want to make sure they are kept

closed and locked. An open gate serves no purpose. If you have children this is a good way to keep them safe by stopping them from wandering out of the yard without an adult. These enclosures also act as a good deterrent and compliment your alarm system. A fence that requires a burglar to climb or spend time unlocking is the first barrier they encounter. Don't let them through it easily. Often enough that extra time to unlock or climb will discourage a would-be thief. Fences and gates are big parts of outdoor security systems. Planting bushes behind them is helpful, too. Always keep them in good repair. This does not mean you have to make your house into a fortress and booby-trap your lawn. You're not defending the Alamo or securing Alcatraz. Consult your wireless security provider on how to use you landscaping in conjunction with the system you have purchased. Remember though, gates are not sufficient by themselves. Even if you live in a gated community, there are ways through these. That is why you should have an alarm system installed. When a burglar has to jump through hoop after hoop it is much more likely they will quit and call it a day.

Tip: Maintaining Security Outside And Inside The House

Protecting the inside of your house starts with maintaining the outside. Just like taking proper care of your yard to eliminate hiding places for burglars, keeping the exterior of your house in good shape is essential to house security. A house with faded paint and splintered wood around doorframes and windows appears vulnerable. This gives the impression that the house is not cared for and may be easier to break into. Observed weakness in entry points like doors and windows makes your home more enticing to burglars. Never leave a broken or damaged entry point boarded up or covered with a sheet of plastic or tarp. The longer you do this the more glaring the vulnerability is. Home repairs can sometimes be costly, however they will be much cheaper and safer than having your home burglarized. Take care of repairs immediately, reinforce doors and windows, and keep up regularly with the paint or siding on your house. If it looks like you care enough to maintain the exterior, criminals will think about what type of wireless security you are willing to install to protect the interior as well.