

## Peace of mind while you move home

Moving home can be an exciting time and we hope you enjoy your new home.

However, when you prepare to move home there is so much to think about to make sure everything goes well. Burglars know this and may be on the lookout for a chance to commit a crime.

Whether you are renting or buying, your chances of being burgled are higher when you move home – both before and after the move. The risk is even greater if you are renting.

**This leaflet gives you advice on how to make your home and belongings more secure.**



## Want to know more about home security?

You can find this leaflet and a range of others on preventing burglary and other crimes at [www.crimereduction.gov.uk](http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk) and [www.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk)

These include:

- A guide to home security
- Peace of mind while you're away
- Coded for keeps
- How to beat the bogus caller
- Be safe, be secure – Your practical guide to crime prevention

You can also contact your local police station for advice. Some police forces will check your home or business premises and recommend ways of improving the security. This is a popular service and, if there is a waiting list, they may send you an information pack so you can check your property yourself. The police website [www.securedbydesign.com](http://www.securedbydesign.com) also contains useful advice.

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# Peace of mind while you move home

Advice on making your home and belongings more secure



Home Office



## ■ Before the move

### Your new home

Ask the previous occupants and their estate agent about crime in the area – has the house been burgled?

Think about changing or installing extra door locks, fitting key-operated locks to windows and ideally an alarm. If there is an alarm, you will want to change the access code. If it's connected to a monitoring service, you will need to register your details with them. Plan ahead so that you can do all this as you move in.

Discuss the security of your new home with your insurance company, housing officer, local police or the person you will be renting your new home from.

### Using tradespeople

Check that you can trust your estate agent, removers and other tradespeople, and that they are members of a professional organisation or association. Use people recommended by friends or, at least, those whose details are advertised in magazines or in directories like Yellow Pages. Never deal with people who only list a mobile phone number.

### Take care with your keys

If you need to give your keys to other people, make sure that you can trust them and ask them to return the keys as soon as they have finished with them. Do not hand out more sets of keys than you need to. Ask them not to label them with your surname or address.

### Estate agents

If you are out a lot, particularly if you have a 'for sale' board outside, ask your estate agent to be careful about the details they give out about you, your work, your security arrangements and the layout of your home. Ask the estate agent to remove their board as soon as the property is sold.



### Insurance cover

Make sure that your home insurance will transfer to your new home and that your belongings will be fully covered during the move itself (either through your own insurance or the removal company's).

### Viewers and other callers

Only allow someone to look at your home if they have made an appointment. If strangers appear without an appointment, do not let them in. Ask them to contact the estate agent first.

### Be careful with rubbish

When you prepare to move home, you may decide to have a clear out of old things. Be careful about leaving large piles of rubbish or packed bins outside your home for too long.

### Packing your belongings

Take care if you collect lots of boxes from local shops – a burglar may see this as a sign that you are moving soon – use large plastic bags for lighter items. Think about leaving small valuable items, like jewellery, at the bank.

## ■ Moving day

### Keep your belongings secure

Ask friends and neighbours to keep an eye on both your old and new homes and your belongings, or to help out on the day of the move. Keep all doors locked (don't forget the garage, shed or patio doors) or keep an eye on them when they are not in use, such as when you take a tea break. Take special care with valuable items such as jewellery, televisions, videos and DVDs.

### Small children and animals

Think about arranging for them to be looked after on the day that you move – one less thing to think about or to distract you.

### The removal van

Make sure that your removers can secure their van to stop it from being stolen when it is left alone. Ask the removers to take care that the door used for loading the van is not left unguarded or unlocked when it is not being used.

## ■ After the move

### Neighbourhood Watch

Most new neighbours are friendly, welcoming and helpful. Get to know them as soon as possible and think about joining your local Neighbourhood Watch.

Your Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator or local police station can give you advice on how to do this or you can find out more at [www.neighbourhoodwatch.net](http://www.neighbourhoodwatch.net)

### New belongings

Don't leave empty boxes outside your home – they can give away details of new and valuable equipment, which may be attractive to burglars.

### Mark your belongings

Marking your belongings can put thieves off and helps the police investigate crimes. So, make sure that your property is marked with your new postcode followed by your home number or the first two letters of the name of your home. Keep your own list of the make, model and serial number of these items. Take photos of any valuable items that can't be marked, like jewellery. Ask at your local police station for advice on how to get 'postcoded property' stickers that you could put in your windows.