

# The Skokie Police Department is Here to Help!

The Skokie Police Department's Crime Prevention/Community Relations Unit is here to answer any of your home security questions. Contact us at 847/982-5919 for additional information on:

- Home security surveys
- Presentations for groups
- Pamphlets or handouts on security issues
- Neighborhood Watch Block organizational meetings
- Solicitor information
- Personal safety information
- Away From Home program

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**The Skokie Police Department**



**Home  
Security**

**Village of Skokie**

**Police Department**

**7300 Niles Center Road**

Emergency: [Fire, Police, Medical] 911

Non Emergency: 847/982-5900

[www.skokie.org](http://www.skokie.org)

*Did you know:  
Security surveys  
are available  
through the Skokie  
Police Department?  
Contact the Skokie  
Police Department  
Crime Prevention  
Unit at 847/982-  
5919 or to arrange  
for a free security  
survey.*

## Home Security Basics

Knowing about a burglar's three worst enemies - light, time and noise - can help you protect your home from crime. A burglar won't find your home an "easy mark" if he's forced to work in the light, if he has to take a lot of time breaking in, and if he can't work quietly.

### "Case" Your Place

Take the time to "case" your house or apartment, just as a burglar would. Consider the following:

#### **Where is the easiest entry and how can you make it more burglar resistant?**

Trim trees and shrubs near your doors and windows, and think carefully before installing a high, wooden fence around your back yard. High fences and shrubbery can add to your privacy, but privacy is a burglar's asset. Consider trading a little extra privacy for a bit of added security. Force any would-be burglar to confront a real enemy - **light**. Exterior lights, mounted out of easy reach, can reduce the darkness a burglar finds comforting.

#### **How can you slow burglars down?**

**Time** is a burglar's enemy, too. A burglar delayed for four or five minutes is apt to give up and try for another, less-difficult location. Simple security devices including such ordinary equipment as nails, screws, padlocks, door and window locks, grates, bars and bolts can discourage intruders and keep them from entering.

#### **How about noise?**

Try to make the general prospect of robbing your home a noisy job. **Noise** is that important third enemy of the burglar. Many types of alarm systems are available with detectors to be mounted on doors and windows. Deciding just how much home protection you need and can afford is a personal judgment. Security surveys are available through the police department.

## **Consider Some Specifics**

Reducing the risk of break-ins is simply a matter of making your home less inviting to burglars than other homes in the neighborhood. It's up to you.

### **DOORS**

Outside doors should be metal or solid hardwood, and at least 3/4 of an inch thick. Frames should be made of equally strong material, and each door must fit its frame securely. Remember, even the most efficient lock will not keep out the determined burglar, if it is placed in a weak door. A peephole or a wide-angle view in the front door is safer for identifying visitors than a door chain. Sliding glass doors present a problem because they are easy to open, but there are locks designed for them. A wooden stick or metal rod in the door channel can help, but don't depend on it for security.

### **LOCKS**

Most doors are equipped with latch door locks. These can easily be defeated. Deadbolt locks are best, if installed properly.

### **WINDOWS**

Key locks are available for all types of windows. Double-hung windows can be secured by simply "pinning" the upper and lower frames together with a nail, which can be removed from the inside. For windows at street level, consider iron gates or grilles.

## **Landlords and Managers**

Common areas of the building should be properly illuminated during hours of darkness. Exterior vestibule and hall doors should be properly secured. Individuals without keys should not be free to randomly wander the halls.

*In an emergency, call the police first before making any other calls. To call the Skokie Police Department, dial: 9-1-1.*

## **Make the Extra Effort**

**Here are some “home security habits” to develop and practice:**

- Establish a routine to follow in making certain that doors and windows are locked and alarm systems are turned on.
- Avoid giving information to unidentified telephone callers, or announcing your personal plans in want ads or public notices. Notify the Skokie Police Department if you see suspicious strangers in your area.
- Remember special vacation tips. When going on vacation, leave blinds open in their usual position. Have mail and packages picked up, forwarded or helped by the post office. Lower the sound of your telephone bell so it can't be heard outside. Arrange to have your lawn mowed or walk shoveled. Stop newspaper deliveries. Ask a friend to pick up advertisements, newspapers and circulars. Contact the Skokie Police Department regarding our Away From Home program. Use automatic timers to turn lights on and off in your living room and bedrooms at appropriate times. Consider connecting a radio to a timer. Inform the Skokie Police Department and dependable neighbors when you plan to be away and start a Neighborhood Watch Block with your neighbors to keep a close watch on what's happening in your area. Working closely with your neighbors is a great way to prevent crime.

## **Just Moved In, Protect Your New Home**

When you move into a new home or apartment, have the locks re-keyed. You never know who might still have a key. Never give your keys to repairmen or others who might need access to your apartment. You should meet them inside. It is very easy to duplicate a key.

Your name, address or apartment number should not appear on your keys. If you misplace them, burglars can use identifying information to locate your home, when you least expect it.

## Stranger Danger

Contact the Skokie Police Department when you observe a stranger behaving in a suspicious manner (loitering and observing, approaching multiple residences without apparent business, or removing property from a neighbor's residence). Never allow strangers into your home.

If you live in a multi-family building, report maintenance problems affecting your security; report burnt-out lights, uncollected trash, graffiti, broken windows, defective security systems and other conditions that detract from the secure appearance of your residence.

Solicitors working within the Village of Skokie are required to register with the Village. If solicitors do not display the appropriate credentials, please notify the Skokie Police Department immediately. Report suspicious vehicles, persons and sounds. Get the best possible description and dial 9-1-1.

## Marking Your Property

The single best protection against theft loss is to mark every piece of property you own as yours. Deterrent value is inherent in marking, and can be increased by posting warnings that property on you premises is marked. Recording the serial numbers and other identifiers during the marking process helps to ensure that you can positively identify your property if it is taken and subsequently recovered, or that you can prove ownership if there is some question.

Almost any article can be marked in some manner. While engraving is the best and the most common means of marking personal property, scratching with a diamond stylus, marking with an indelible pen, etching with a chemical solution and painting ownership marks are also frequently-used methods. The Skokie Police Department's Crime Prevention/Community Relations Unit will loan individuals an electric engraver (proper I.D. is required).

*Keep an inventory of your personal property in a safe place so that in the event of theft or loss, you have the information you need to make a police report and/or insurance claim.*