

## Holiday checklist

Help reduce the risk of your home being broken into by taking some simple home security measures:

- Leave small valuable items, like jewellery, on deposit at the bank, or consider installing a small floor safe. Don't lock internal doors or desks - they may be forced if someone does break in.
- Mark any valuable items with your post-code followed by a house number or the first two digits of the house name. Ask your local Crime Prevention Officer for 'postcoded property' warning stickers to display in the front and back windows of your house. Also take photographs of all valuable items. This is particularly important for those which may be unsuitable for marking.
- Arrange for pets to be properly looked after.
- Cut the lawns before you go.
- Cancel deliveries of milk, newspapers etc, discreetly - don't announce your departure to a shop full of people. Only tell people who need to know you're going away.
- Make sure your house looks occupied. Closed curtains in the daytime make it look as if no one is at home. It is worthwhile to get automatic time switches to switch lights, and a radio on and off in downstairs or upstairs rooms.
- Don't leave valuable items like TV's, videos or hi-fi's visible through windows.
- Lock the garage and shed with proper security locks, after putting all your tools safely away so they cannot be used to break into your house. If you have to leave a ladder out, put it on its side and lock it to a secure fixture with a 'close-shackle' padlock and heavy-duty chain.
- Don't have your home address showing on your luggage for the outward journey. Put this only on the inside of your cases.
- Finally lock all outside doors and windows. If you have a burglar alarm, make sure it is set - and that you have told the police who the key-holder is.

AND just before you actually set off it's worth allowing a quiet couple of minutes on the doorstep to check you've done all you had to do and taken everything you need with you.

For crime prevention advice go to: [www.crimereduction.org](http://www.crimereduction.org)