

# Protecting homes against burglary

- useful information



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# Helping to protect your home against burglary

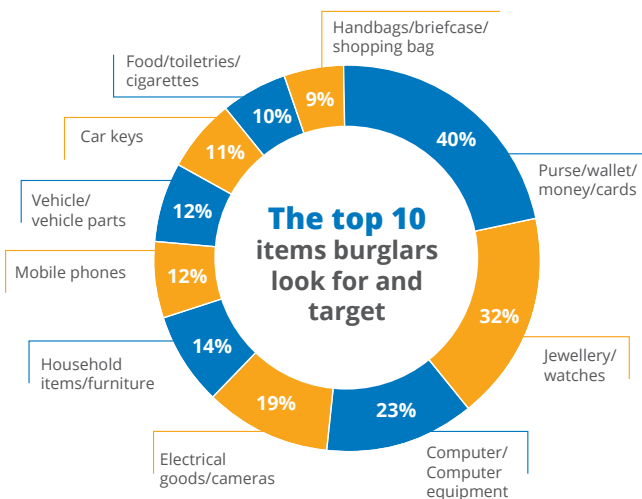
Whether you live in the city or the countryside, the area is quiet or busy, we are all sadly at risk of burglary.

We have put together some information that may help give an indication of when and where burglaries tend to take place, what tends to be targeted and some preventative measures you can put in place to help minimise your risk of becoming a victim of theft.

A lot of burglaries that take place are opportunistic crimes and as prevention is always better than the cure, here are some measures you can put in place to deter thieves and best protect your home.

## How do burglars choose the homes to target?

- **Windows without curtains or blinds** – an open invitation for anyone to look in and see what you have; neighbours and burglars!
- **Poor door locks** - if your lock cylinder sticks out more than the depth of a £1 coin, then it can easily be attacked by criminals.
- **Old door handles** – if they are starting to become loose, make the upgrade and replace them.
- **Unlocked or open doors / windows** - an open door is an open opportunity.
- **Back garden** – a dark back garden with good side access and without motion sensor-activated floodlights is a gift to burglars.
- **Garden fencing** – it may look nice but what about its quality and effectiveness? Never pick a fence just because it looks good. Ensure it is sturdy and cannot be scaled too easily.
- **Social media** – don't post comments or pictures that you are going away, whether it be for the weekend or on holiday. You are telling people the house is empty!



**"On average, a burglary in England and Wales costs **£2,856**, as a mean average."**

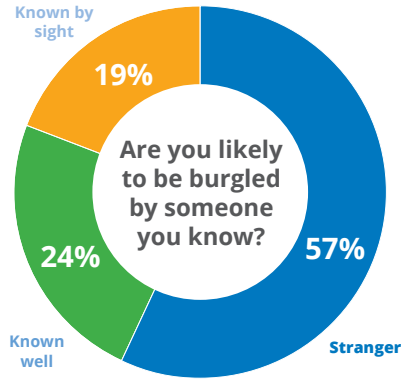
**"The cost of stolen items in a burglary amounts to more than **£1,000** in **44%** of incidents."**

# Are you likely to be burgled by someone you know?

It might be surprising to learn that as many as **24%** of all burglaries are committed by someone the victim knows well. This could be a friend, family member or neighbour that knows your routine.

**19%** of all burglaries for the year ending March 2022 are committed by someone that the homeowner knows by sight or speaks to, which could be a more distant neighbour or an acquaintance.

The highest proportion of burglaries (**57%**) are committed by strangers to the victim.



The Top 5 Most Burgled Regions in UK	Burglaries per 1000 households
1. Greater Manchester	14.9
2. South Yorkshire	13.3
3. West Midlands	13.2
4. Cleveland	12.5
5. Greater London	11.4

## What to do after a burglary at your house

Sadly, even if you follow all reasonable precautions, a burglary can still happen.

If you are one of the unlucky ones and you have been burgled, it's important to follow these steps:

- 1. Call 101 to report the burglary** - you'll be given a crime reference number that you will need to quote to your insurer.
- 2. Don't touch anything** - a burglary can feel very distressing and your first instinct may be to clean up all signs of the break-in. Don't do this until the police have arrived and collected any evidence such as fingerprints from your home.
- 3. Take photographs of any damage** - again, you will need this for insurance.
- 4. If your wallet has been stolen, cancel all banks cards.**
- 5. Make a list of all the items that have been stolen** - try to find any receipts you may have kept.
- 6. Contact your home insurance provider to file your claim.**

## How you can protect your home

- **Install a smart home security system** – this is probably the most essential step to protecting your home. Smart systems can include motion sensors, camera doorbells and touch screen alarm panels.
- **Use smart lighting** - smart bulbs (and smart plugs) can be connected to your broadband at home so you can control them remotely through an app on your phone, so whether you're at home or away, the house looks like it is occupied.
- **Check your locks** – make sure all your locks are in good working order. Remember sheds or garages and less commonly used windows and doors. Yale recommend checking that your cylinder is rated at TS007 3-star Kitemark and consider changing it if it isn't as this assures you that it meets the standards set out by the British Standards Institute (BSI).
- **Extra front door security options** - consider if additional security measures are required such as a door chain or a letter plate restrictor as they can help prevent letterbox fishing.
- **Join your local community groups** – whether it be your local Neighbourhood Watch or online community groups in your area, you can keep up to date with what's going on, what's being shared in your town, or if there is anything you should be on the lookout for.
- **Don't have valuable items on show** - when burglars enter a home the most likely items to be stolen are small, valuable items that are left in plain sight. It can make a huge difference if you hide your most valuable possessions before you leave home.
- **Schedule deliveries for when you are home** – a parcel left on the door or behind the bin is an easy target.
- **Visual deterrents** – a home alarm system, motion triggered lights and/or CCTV work well as effective visual deterrents for burglars and would typically cause them to move on to another target.
- **Gravel pathways** – sounds simple but anything that might make a noise such as a gravel path will deter thieves as they prefer to work under the cover of darkness and in complete silence.

**Information Sources:** <https://www.adt.co.uk/blog/the-2022-adt-burglary-report>  
<https://www.idealhome.co.uk/property-advice/how-to-prevent-burglary-275841>

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