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Subject: "Whenever you take a step forward..."

Preheader: Because small things make a world of difference

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It's always the little things that make a difference.



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Picks and Tips from Mike the Locksmith

From the World of Mike-the-Locksmith

you are bound to disturb something" - Indira Gandhi

October is here. Fear not the ghouls! This month, I bring to you two articles "9 Home Security Life Hacks You Didn't



Know You Needed", and "20 Top Security Products Under \$20".

Have a security concern or need some sound advice? Give us a call; we're happy to help.

240-506-7500.

Mike-the-Locksmith

9 Home Security Life Hacks You Didn't Know You Needed



Courtesy of SafeWise.com

Your home should be a sanctuary of comfort and safety. But even if you live in one of the safest cities in America, there's a chance your home could be burglarized. After all, a break-in occurs every twenty seconds in the United States. Here's the good news: there are many simple steps you can take to boost your home security.

Whether you want to add to your existing home security system or

you're just looking to make your home less vulnerable to an intruder, our home security life hacks are likely to help. Not a seasoned DIYer? Don't worry. Most of these hacks are super easy and surprisingly low-budget.

Here are our top home security tips for making your home a safer place.

Start by Assessing Possible Security Weaknesses

Protecting your home starts with becoming aware of its security vulnerabilities. [Take a home security quiz to help identify security weakness.](#) Based on your answers, SafeWise will generate a custom report that scores the security of your home and gives you additional tips for ways to secure your home to help fortify it against criminals.

1. Download a Crime-Tracking App

Once you've addressed your home's immediate security vulnerabilities, it's time to become more aware of the crime taking place in and around your neighborhood. With this knowledge, you can take additional precautions to keep your belongings and family safe. Thanks to technology, crime stats are right at your fingertips. Download [CrimeReports](#), [SpotCrime](#), or [another SafeWise-approved crime-tracking tool](#) to keep tabs on wrongdoings in your neighborhood.

2. Put Up Home Security Cameras

Installing indoor and outdoor home security cameras is one of the top things people tell us they wished they'd done before their home was burglarized. And, in the event your home is broken into, footage captured by your security camera may help law enforcement identify those responsible. There are several different types of home security cameras. Some come as part of a complete home security system, while others can be purchased as a stand-alone security device. Either way, the most effective cameras are the ones with features like motion detection, night vision, and built-in Wi-Fi. [Take a look at the fifteen home security cameras SafeWise recommends.](#)

3. Be Sneaky with Your Spare Key

A burglar's intuition is keen when it comes to locating "hidden" outdoor keys. So don't place your spare keys in obvious locations such as under the doormat or planter. Instead, hide your spare key somewhere much less conspicuous and at least fifty feet from your home. Better yet, replace your traditional lock set with a [top-rated electronic keyless door lock](#) and you'll never need to worry about stashing a key again. Note: Mike's Locksmith DOES NOT RECOMMEND Kwikset products due to vulnerabilities.

4. Replace the Front Door

This home security tip requires more skill and money than our other hacks-but it's well worth it. Burglars don't think twice about breaking weak front doors, so you'll want to protect your home with a steel core door or another security door instead of a standard wooden one. If investing in a new door isn't in your budget, then replace the lockset that came with your door with a long-throw deadbolt. Kick your home's security up a notch by installing a WiFi enabled digital door-viewer (replaces your peep hole) , such as the Yale Look, which allows you to see who's at the door without opening it. y

5. Lock Your Doors

Locking your home's entry doors-even when you're inside-isn't being paranoid. It's taking a proactive approach to home safety, especially considering [someone is home during almost one-third of all burglaries](#). Round up your family members and make a pact to consistently lock your home's doors. If you have a hard time remembering to secure your home, you might want to install an electronic door lock like the Yale Real Living deadbolt or the ENTR Lock, which can be set to self-locking mode.

6. Hide Valuable Items

Criminals want to get in and out of your house as fast as possible-taking with them your jewelry, cash, electronic devices, and other goodies they can sell or pawn. Make their job difficult by securing these items in a safe. Reference the [SafeWise home safe buyers guide](#) to learn what to look for in a safe and how to choose the right one for your needs. Then, find out what burglars like to steal most and take appropriate steps to secure these items in your home. One of our best home security life hacks is to hide your valuables in safes that look like everyday items. Use a wall clock safe or a safe

that looks like an electrical outlet to store small valuables.

7. Make It Appear You're Home

If a burglar thinks someone is home, there's less chance they'll try to break in. In fact, most break-ins happen when someone isn't home, like during the day when you are at work or when you're on vacation. Fortunately, there are several easy home security hacks to help fool would-be intruders-like leaving the TV on or using a device like the [Orvibo Wi-Fi Smart Socket Outlet](#) to control lights from your smart device. Take time to prepare your home if you're going on vacation by stopping your mail, arranging to have your yard maintained, and asking a friend to stop by regularly. These home security hacks can go a long way toward making your house appear lived-in.

8. Secure Your Yard

It's important to make sure the inside of your home is protected, but it's equally vital to secure your yard. Burglars love hiding places, so one of our favorite home security tips is to keep shrubs and other vegetation trimmed. Other hacks to burglar-proof your yard include installing motion sensor lighting and securing sheds or other outbuildings with a [strong padlock like these from Mul-T-Lock](#).

9. Fortify Your Garage

Many people don't realize how important it is to secure their garage. But your garage likely contains expensive tools, your car, and quick access to your home. Try these life hacks to [help secure your garage](#): keep the garage door closed so that passersby can't see what's inside, lock the door leading from your garage into your home, and install a motion sensor light above your garage. Help minimize the chance of a garage break-in by never leaving the garage door opener in your car, especially when your car is parked in the driveway.

20 Top Security Products Under \$20



Courtesy of SafeWise

1. Mpow Solar-Powered Outdoor Motion Sensing Light/ \$18

Intruders literally bank on coming and going without being seen, making outdoor lights a cheap and easy way to deter burglars at night. SafeWise is a big fan of Mpow's motion sensing light because it uses solar power, so it won't falter in a power outage or require much DIY skill to install on your own.

Pros: Three Modes. With three intelligent modes, this light illuminates those dark areas of your yard where burglars could lurk.

Long Range. Eight powerful LED lights brighten a 26-foot radius.

Solar-powered. This device requires no external power source, so it works off the grid, is easily installed anywhere, and works in power-outages-plus, the newly designed solar panel charges the battery in record time.

Con: Cloudy days impact power. Without direct sunshine, this motion-sensing spotlight won't do its job.

2. Doberman Security Entry Defense Alarm/ \$12

About 30 percent of burglars enter the home through unlocked windows and doors. If you forget to lock up, the Doberman Security Entry Defense Alarm has you covered with a 100-decibel siren-about as loud as a jackhammer-to scare intruders off before they harm you or your home.

Pros: Heard from far away. The loud alarm makes it possible for people to hear the siren from over one mile away.

Easy Install. Peel-and-stick installation allows you to place sensors on any windows and doors you want to monitor.

Con: Not Tamper-proof. The Doberman Security Entry Defense Alarm runs on battery power and adheres to surfaces, making it easy to remove and disable.

3. Prime-Line Aluminum Patio Door Security Bar / \$17

Sliding glass patio doors are easy access points for intruders because of their weak locks and breakable glass. To prevent a thief from prying your sliding door open, install a Prime-Line aluminum patio door security bar to reinforce the lock and make it impossible to open from the outside.

Pros: Strong yet lightweight aluminum makes it easy to use this security bar.

Variety of Finishes. Choose silver, bronze, or white finishes to blend in with your home décor.

Con: Could be Stronger. Aluminum is strong, but not as tough as steel, so the security bar could weaken over time-leaving your home susceptible to theft.

4. UniquExceptional Fake Security Camera/ \$8

If a criminal thinks they're being watched, there's a good chance they'll abandon their break-in attempt. That's the whole idea behind UniquExceptional's fake security camera. Install these "cameras" inside or outside your home to give the illusion that it's protected with high-tech security.

Pros: This fake UniquExceptional security camera looks the part with realistic infrared lights and a video feed cable.

Long-lasting Power. Two AA batteries last up to one year in these dummy cameras.

Indoor/Outdoor. Use this camera inside or outside your

home.**Con:** If an intruder calls your bluff and enters your home, you won't receive any warning or notification from this device

5. Siensync Solar-powered Outdoor Spotlight / \$18

The Siensync solar-powered outdoor spotlight is a super quick fix for gaps in your outdoor security. Since it uses the power of the sun, you won't need to wire any electrical. Instead, stake this motion sensing light in your front yard, by your mailbox, near a hatchway,

or wherever you need added protection without much fuss.

Pro: Color Options. Choose from bright white light or spotlights that change color from purple to red so you can go traditional or funky with your home security (although we recommend white as the most practical option for security purposes). Use these motion sensing spotlights outside without fear of rain, snow, or ice damage.

6. Artscape Etched Glass Window Film / \$20

Visible valuables like electronics, jewelry, and nice furniture tempt curious trespassers to break into your home. But when you use Artscape Etched Glass Window Film, they won't be able to see what's inside or if anyone is there. This window film also offers privacy without blocking light—just nosey people who are up to no good.

Pros: Standard Size. This window film fits the average window, 24 x 36, but you can combine more than one sheet to cover larger spaces.

No Sticky Adhesive. If you decide to take this window film off and move it somewhere else, you won't have to deal with messy adhesive.

Although plastic, Artscape's window film has the texture of translucent stained glass.

7. Schlage One-Way Wide Angle Peephole / \$16

Home invasions happen in the U.S. every nine minutes. Protect yourself from opening the door to someone dangerous with Schlage's one-way wide angle "peephole" viewer. The thick glass and 190-degree angle view let you keep an eagle eye on your front porch and allow only people on the inside to see who's waiting outside the door.

Pros: Easy Install. Install this peephole yourself with a 9/16" drill bit.

One-Way. The thick, wide-angle glass prevents anyone from looking into your home and shows homeowners who's knocking at the door.

Con: This product only fits doors between 1-3/8 inches and 2-1/8 inches thick, so if your door has different dimensions, you're out of luck.

8. Brinks Indoor Digital Timer with Plug-In Motion Sensor/ \$8

Indoor motion sensors are another line of defense against burglars who make it inside. When triggered, Brink's motion sensor turns on any device plugged into it, like a lamp or television-an unpleasant surprise for a nervous intruder.

Pros: Depending on your schedule, program this motion sensor to activate at certain times of day.

360-Degree Sensor. Monitor motion in all directions within 15 feet of this sensor.

Con: Not for Pet Owners. Pets can trigger this motion sensor and set off false alarms

9. SentrySafe Combination Safe/ \$20

Intruders and burglars typically head to the master bedroom first, so make sure the valuables you store there are secure in the SentrySafe combination safe. Although it's small, measuring just six inches by eight inches, this three-number mechanical safe is big enough to accommodate fine jewelry, handguns, and cash.

Pros: At three pounds, this safe transports easily.

Added Security. A steel tethering cable prevents burglars from stealing the entire safe when tied to a secure stud.

TSA-Approved. This safe meets TSA standards and is fit to transport firearms on airplanes. However, always check with your airline before heading to the airport in case rules have changed.

10. SABRE Shed and Garage Alarm/ \$11

Thieves break into garages in under six minutes on average and smaller sheds in even less. The SABRE shed and garage alarm is your defense against these kinds of attacks because the sensors sound an ear-piercing alarm when they sense motion. Plus, SABRE's alarm is better than most since it has a combination keypad, so only you may turn off the alarm-not sneaky intruders.

Pros: Easy Install. Install in minutes with three AAA batteries and an adhesive strip.

A 120-decibel alarm, heard up to 750 feet away, scares off intruders and alerts the whole neighborhood.

Sound Modes. Switch this alarm to chime mode when you're home and into full siren mode at night or when on vacation.

The keypad ensures this device can't be disabled by burglars-only those who know the Not Fully Tamper-proof. This device has a key code, but it could be easily disabled by removing the batteries.password.

Con: **Not Fully Tamper-proof.** This device has a key code, but it could be easily disabled by removing the batteries.

11. Doberman Security Ultra-Slim Window Alarm/ \$12

Even if you have locks on all windows and doors, intruders may smash glass to get inside. That's where the Doberman window alarm comes in. By detecting vibrations, this portable alarm knows when glass shatters and alerts you with a loud alarm.

Pros: The Doberman Security window alarm sounds a **100-decibel alarm** if vibration (like glass breaking) is detected.

Two Under \$20. Buy two sensors for under \$20 to protect more of your home for less.

Slim Design. The skinny design makes this glass-break sensor ideal for RVs, windows, sliding doors, and more.

Con: Not Tamper-Proof. This alarm has an on-off switch on the front, which makes it easy for intruders to simply turn it off.

12. GE Personal Security Window/Door Alarm/ \$10

Windows and doors attract burglars because they're easily pried open and often left unlocked. If anyone tampers with your windows and doors-locked or not-these GE window and door alarms trigger a startling siren. Conveniently, these alarms come with an on, off, or chime mode too, so you may select the security function you need throughout the day.

13. Orvibo Wi-Fi Smart Socket Outlet / \$20

Don't stress out over potential break-ins while you're running errands, on vacation, or out for the evening with the Orvibo smart outlet. Instead, control this outlet and whatever's plugged into it from your smart device, so you can turn lights on and off throughout the day to make it appear as if you're home. Burglars don't often target homes that look inhabited, so this outlet provides great defense against theft. Also consider comparing other smart outlets for more convenience and security.

Pros: Home Automation. Use the app to control appliances, lights, and other electronics from wherever you are.

Control 20 Devices. This smart outlet uses WiFi to communicate with other smart electronics and appliances. Set timers to control up to 10 different electronics and control up to 20 manually at any given time.

14. Techko Door Alarm / \$13

About 30 percent of burglars enter through the front door, so reinforce your security with this Techko Door Alarm. The alarm works by detecting vibration and emitting a loud siren to alert you of an intrusion. If you're a frequent VRBO or Airbnb user, use this on doors in your home where visitors aren't allowed; it's sure to keep them out.

Pros: The door alarm sounds a 100-110-decibel siren, which is about as loud as a power saw.

Chime or Siren. Choose whether you want this alarm to chime when it detects motion or go into full alert mode with an ear-piercing alarm.

Delayed Siren. This alarm has a delayed siren feature, so you won't trigger the alarm while setting up or relocating this device.

Con: No Low-Battery Warning. This alarm operates on three AAA batteries and needs to be checked often to ensure it's working.

15. Hydreon Corporation - FakeTV FTV-10 Burglar Deterrent / \$20

This device seems like something Kevin McCallister (of the film Home Alone) would have enjoyed. The FakeTV FTV-10 mimics the light and flash of an illuminated television to make it look like you're home-even when you're not.

16. GE SmartHome Security Sign and Stickers / \$12

Homes with alarm systems are three times less likely to be burglarized. Give the illusion that your house is protected by a top-of-the-line security system-even when it isn't-with the GE SmartHome package. Hopefully, the idea of 24/7 surveillance will send a burglar running in the other direction.

17. Swann Indoor Door and Window Sensors (package of 4) / \$18

Other window and door sensors that use vibration to detect a break-in could trigger false alarms. You won't have to worry about that with Swann door and window sensors because they use magnets: If someone opens a window or door, the magnetic connection breaks and sounds a shrill siren to alert you, neighbors, and the intruder himself.

Pros: When the magnetic bond breaks, a 110-decibel alarm sounds, which is about as loud as a rock concert.

Easy Install. Use the self-adhesive pads included in your order to set up these window and door sensors quickly and easily.

Fewer False Alarms. The magnets prevent false alarms often triggered in vibration-based devices.

Con: Not Tamper-proof. There is no code to disarm this alarm or hard-wiring to secure it to a wall, so burglars may disable this device.

18. Vigilant Personal Alarm / \$16

A personal security alarm provides you with portable safety wherever you go. We love the Vigilant model because it's affordable, long-lasting, and loud. If you ever find yourself in a dangerous situation-whether in the driveway, jogging, or out on the town-trigger this alarm to scare your assailant and call for help. (Add a portable pepper spray canister to up your personal security even more.)

19. Prime-Line Deadbolt Reinforcer / \$15

Deadbolts are built to last, but they can't do their job if the rest of your door is vulnerable to kicking, prying, and ramming. The solution? Replace your deadbolt strike-and-latch with Prime-Line's hardware to prevent thieves from entering with force. The long screws included with this product add extra strength and durability to an otherwise weak portion of your door.

20. GE Personal Security Door Stop / \$14

Kicking a door down isn't just a Hollywood stunt. Burglars do it every day to get into homes and steal valuables. Aside from purchasing the Prime-Line Deadbolt Reinforcer above, fortify your door with the GE door stop. This device restricts access to entryways and triggers an alarm in the case of forced entry. The rubber base provides traction on wood, tile, vinyl, and carpet, and the whole door stop turns on and off, so it's only armed when you need it to be.

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