

WINDOW SECURITY

Windows and doors left open for a quick trip to the shops or to run something over to a neighbour are an invitation for a burglar to enter easily without force, and access your house or garage.

Windows are the main point of entry for burglars. 60% of burglaries are made by entry through windows.

The most common method of breaking in is to smash the glass and release the handle. Most window locks will either lock the frames together, make the handles immovable, or lock the stay arm. Locking the frames together gives the best result.

There are several approaches you can take to minimise the threat of entry through your windows.

- Fit a central alarm system and add sensors to all windows.
- Install metal bars or metal shutters over the windows, although very secure they usually don't enhance your view and may pose a problem in case of fire.
- Replace all glass with tempered glass or polycarbonate. This is very effective when used in conjunction with window locks but the cost would be prohibitive for the average home owner.
- Install security latches and other such devices onto your windows. These are inexpensive and easy to install and will usually deter burglars, unless they are willing to break the glass despite the noise.

There are various devices designed to lock the opening part of the window (the sash). Some will allow the window to be opened a little for ventilation. Fit two bolts to large sash windows for extra security. When locks are used on windows, make sure there are keys in each room so a window can be opened in case of an emergency.

Do not permanently screw down windows that may be needed as an escape route in time of fire

Casement windows, which have cranks, can be secured by simply removing the handle. Leave it in an accessible place in case of fire.

Air conditioners and fans installed in windows can often be removed by a burglar so be sure the units are fixed to the house in such a way that they cannot be removed from the outside and ensure that the window cannot be raised.