



With more than two million homes burgled in the United States each year, it's important to protect yourself from intrusions — especially during times your house is left unattended. Below is a list of the top tips to ward off criminals, so that your travels go off without a hitch.

### **1. Monitor your home from afar**

It's important to keep tabs on your home, even when traveling to the far reaches of the world. The easiest way to do so is by installing security cameras. Most modern cameras are equipped with night vision and motion sensors, and can be synced with your mobile device or tablet.

It's important to consider that simple surveillance may not be enough in the event of a break-in — it's one thing to watch your home being raided, and another to ensure that swift action is taken in a worst-case-scenario situation. There really is no comparison to installing a professional security system to monitor your home. Watching the place yourself can be time consuming — and can detract from your vacation. It also doesn't allow for quick reactions should you notice anything amiss. Consider **Marshall Alarm Systems** installing a professional monitored home security system. **Call 914-962-4699 for your FREE custom estimate.**

### **2. Make it look like you're at home**

An abandoned home makes for an obvious target, so do your best to make it look like someone is at home. There are several ways to keep up the facade: Have your mail stopped, keep up with the yard work and shovel the snow. Have a neighbor park their cars in your driveway. You can also ask someone to take your garbage bins out on collection day — no one needs to know they're empty.

Another obvious trick is to automate specific electronics in your home, such as programming your lights or a stereo to switch on a certain time. The flurry of activity will make your house looked lived in. A low-cost, energy efficient way of doing this is with a push light. Switch on the battery-powered light before you leave, and let it glow throughout the duration of your trip. Smart plugs also offer the ability to control your lamps remotely.

### **3. Keep your travel on the down-low**

Of course, it's okay to tell Mom when you're leaving on a trip, but try not to broadcast it too widely. Many people share personal information on Twitter or Facebook or post travel photos on Instagram without realizing how many people can access it. Would you announce to a crowd of strangers that your home will be vacant over Christmas? Probably not.

Avoid posting about upcoming travel on social media or other Internet sites — this is a clear signal that you won't be around. Perhaps more importantly, avoid posting remotely when you're out of the country. Most sites will tell viewers where you're posting from, and can draw criminals to an empty home. Yes, these are extreme measures, but they'll be sure to keep your home safe and secure.

### **4. Pull the plug on electronics**

Leaving devices plugged in can make it simpler for intruders to get into your home. An active garage door, for example, can be activated easily by a universal remote. Also remember to unplug the GPS from any car left in airport parking — burglars have been known to hop in and hit "Home."

### **5. Prepare for the worst**

No one wants their home to be burglarized, but it's better to be prepared. Before leaving on your trip, check your insurance policies. Make sure everything is up to date and provides accurate protection. Ensure that your coverage extends to robberies, as opposed to just accidents like floods or fires. And don't forget to take photos of your belongings — this documentation can save you headaches in case of crisis. The first thing your insurance company will ask for in the event of a robbery is evidence of what was damaged or stolen.