

HOME SECURITY “How To Protect Yourself”

(Compiled by Officer Justin Wilson & Officer David M. Schiff)

Primary Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, Quantico, Va

Background:

1. Women living alone are “attractive” targets for scam artists and intruders to attack and raped them in their homes.
2. The offenders believe that women who live alone will be easier to control and less of a risk (for the offender) to rob, attack, and rape.
3. They do NOT know their attacker or may know them slightly from seeing them in the neighborhood (e.g., mowing a neighbor’s yard)
4. Access: through unlocked door, unlocked window, open window – or through a con by posing as a sales rep, delivery person, or other.

How to Protect Yourself:

1. Always keep ALL doors locked – even when you are at home. Rapists and robbers frequently just walk in.
2. If you come home and a door is unlocked (after you locked it when you left), leave the area of your house/apartment IMMEDIATELY, call the police and/or go to a neighbor and call the police. A burglar or rapist may be in the house waiting for you to come home.
3. Install a peephole in your front door that ensures you can see your porch very clearly. Rapist and robbers may ring bell, then hide on side out of range of peep hole.
4. Do NOT open door for ANY stranger:
 - a. Sales reps, canvassers, “kids” selling magazines, “Girl Scouts” selling cookies, a man in distress – these could be rouses (cons) to get you to open door, then rapist easily forces his way in.
 - b. Package delivery person – even if in FedEx or UPS uniform (uniforms are easy to steal or get in other ways). Have them leave the package outside (even if it is raining). Wait until the truck leaves, then wait 30 minutes before getting the package – or call a male neighbor to come over to verify the “delivery person” has left.
5. Close ALL curtains at night.
6. When you do plan to be away, install timers to randomly turn on lights, radios, and/or televisions to make it seem like you are home.
7. Keep a pair of men’s boots (large ones) on your porch to give the impression you have a male family member living with you. The boots should look worn, and preferably have some mud on them.

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8. Do NOT reveal when you will be away to anyone you do NOT know OR what time you will be home or that you live alone. Rapists and burglars telephone as sales reps asking when would be a good time to come by to “inspect/show” a product or service. Rapists and robbers posing as delivery persons will ask if a man will be home to help with a delivery (e.g., refrigerator, TV set, etc.). They will then plan to deliver when a man is not home. If you are expecting a delivery, verify it with the vendor and/or have a male friend home with you at the expected delivery time.
9. Do NOT list your phone number.
10. Do NOT leave notes on your door when you will be away or when you’ll return.
11. Do NOT hide your key(s) near your porch. If you want to hide a key outside so you can get in if you lose your keys – get a consult from a knowledgeable person as to where and how to hide your keys so that rapist/burglar will not find them.
12. Have the exterior of your home well lit. Photosensitive lights (i.e., they come on when it gets dark and stay on all night) are better than having only motion detection lights (my opinion). Best to have both.