Can you spot the empty house? So did the burglar.

During winter, houses are more likely to be burgled in the early evening. Put lights on timers in the rooms you use most to make it look like you're in. Turn over for more tips.

🔒 **SECURE**
▦ **PROTECT**
✋ **PREVENT**

1. Close and lock all **windows and doors every** time you leave the house or go to bed. Make sure that the door is locked properly i.e. lift the handle, turn the key and then remove the key ensuring that it is available for you to exit in case of emergency but out of sight from prying eyes.

2. If you have a **burglar alarm** use it at all times, even if just popping out for a moment, or zone off areas before going to bed.

3. Leave **lights** on timers or radios on in the rooms you use the most, invest in a TV simulator such as 'Fake TV' to make it look like you are in. Fit external lighting using energy saving bulbs or LED's which are activated by a dawn to dusk sensor. If burglars see your house has security lighting they are less likely to approach for fear of being seen.

4. Secure your **boundaries** and ensure access to your back garden is not easily obtained, lock gates and consider some spiky plants. Look out for climbing aids such as wheelie bins that may make it easier for the burglar to get in. Keep s**heds, garage** and other outbuildings locked securely, as they may contain valuable items or tools that may be used to break into your house.

5. Use forensic marking or other **property marking** methods to identify your property and display any product signage/labels. Keep an inventory of your property including serial numbers and photographs. This can be done in a paper version or on an online asset recording product. Make sure you include details such as identifying marks, value, and purchase date.

Information on security products including property marking products and, asset recording products can be found at: **www.securedbydesign.com**

For further crime prevention information visit: **www.essex.police.uk/cp/crime-prevention**

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