



# Preventing residential and garage burglaries

Home and garage burglaries are among the most common crimes in Oak Park. Burglars may use ordinary tools such as screwdrivers and crowbars to pry open weak locks, or simply break a window or kick in a door. However, in more than a third of the burglaries, offenders don't use force at all – they just walk through an unlocked door or crawl through an unlocked window. With just a few simple steps, property owners can reduce the likelihood of becoming a burglary victim.

## Protect your home

- Close and lock all doors and windows.
- Install audible alarms on entry points.
- Prominently post an alarm system warning decal.
- Increase outdoor lighting – use motion sensors to save electricity.
- Get to know your neighbors so you can keep an eye out for each other's property.

## Protect your garage

- Keep the doorframe and locks in good condition – use a deadbolt with long screws that reach well in the frame structure.
- Always lock the side service door – in half of all garage burglaries in Oak Park, the thief walked through an unlocked service door.
- Cover windows so a thief can't see what is inside.
- Make sure the overhead door is closed completely before leaving the garage.
- Install good lighting – features like motion detectors and automatic dusk-to-dawn switching are especially effective.

## How thieves think...

Burglars consider the following when selecting targets:

- Familiarity and convenience – how well do I know this neighborhood?
- Occupancy – can I easily tell if anyone is home?
- Visibility – can I get in and out without being seen?
- Accessibility – how easily and how fast can I get in and out?
- Vulnerability and security – is the resident elderly or is there a security system?
- Potential rewards – what will I get for the risk?

**Keep up to date on criminal activity in the neighborhood – attend your monthly Resident Beat Officer (RBO) meeting. Visit [www.oak-park.us/police](http://www.oak-park.us/police) for schedules.**

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### **Oak Park Police Department**

*Committed to community, integrity and excellence in public safety*

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[police@oak-park.us](mailto:police@oak-park.us)

708.434.1630 crime tip hotline

[www.oak-park.us/police](http://www.oak-park.us/police)

**Always call 9-1-1 in an emergency.**

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