

Stay Safe in Your Neighborhood

Dear Neighbours,

Safety is a top priority for our community, and we want to share some valuable tips and information to help keep you and your family secure. These recommendations come from a recent Safety Town Hall meeting with members of the Toronto Police.

In Case of a Break-In:

- If your house is broken into, exit the way you entered the house and try not to touch anything so police can process the crime scene.
- Do not enter your home as the criminal may still be inside. Call police from a neighbors house or your cellphone.

Car Security:

- Wheel locks on cars work better than the Club on the steering wheel, which can be easily cut. Stay vigilant!
- Consider hiding 2-3 air tags or GPS trackers in your car to make it easier to find if stolen. Ensure the air tags are well hidden.
- Install a Vehicle Kill Switch to deter thieves.
- Lock your car doors and roll up the windows, even when parked in your own driveway. Thieves are opportunistic and may target unlocked vehicles.
- Keep valuables out of sight.

Home Security:

- Ensure that all doors and windows are securely locked when you're not at home, especially during the longer, darker evenings.
- Use timers or smart home technology to create the illusion that someone is home by turning lights on and off.
- Invest in security film on windows and doors from a well-known company or referral.
- Add door plates and extra locks at the top and bottom of your doors for added protection.
- Adjust security camera angles so you capture more than just the top of intruders' heads.
- Install a security system or cameras on DVR (non-Wifi) for enhanced security.
- Have your mail and packages picked up when you're away - or better yet, have the packages sent to a trusted neighbor while you are away! You can also consider using a delivery locker service or PO Box.
- Arrange for someone to clear snow from your property when you're not home.
- Consider a Neighbourhood Watch sign, alarm company sign, and a "Beware of Dog" sign on your property, along with a leash hanging over a railing and a dog water bowl to deter potential intruders.

Lighting Matters:

- Use lighting to make your house more visible at night and consider motion lights to deter intruders.
- As the days get shorter, ensure that outdoor lighting is working correctly. Well-lit pathways and entrances improve safety and security.
- Place lights at a height where thieves cannot easily unscrew them.
- Explore Perimeter Motion Detection as an extra layer of security.

Crime Reporting:

- Remember, it's essential to report suspicious activity even if you don't witness the crime being committed. Your reports help the police identify trends and allocate patrols. Include photos and videos if possible. Call 911 in an emergency, or 416-808-2222 for non-emergency calls.
- Understand that any retaliation you take against a perpetrator must be equal to the threat. Shooting an unarmed person simply for entering your house is not justified.

Other Precautions:

- Be mindful of what you share on social media. Avoid posting your travel plans or announcing when you'll be away from home for an extended period. This information can be used by burglars to target your home.
- Do not include your travel plans on your answering machine.
- Do not tell your taxi driver or chauffer your travel plans on the way to the airport. If possible, arrange for pickup from a separate location from your residence.

Stay Informed:

- Visit <https://cptedcanada.com/cpted-principles/> to learn about Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles.
- You can also book a safety audit of your home where a Toronto Police officer will make recommendations to reduce the chances of becoming a victim of crime. Call the Toronto Police Non-emergency line to arrange a visit.

We hope you find these tips helpful and that they contribute to the safety and well-being of our community. Together, we can make our neighbourhood a safer place for everyone.

Stay safe and vigilant!

The Summerhill Residents Association