



Home Invasion

Home invasion is one of the most frightening and potentially dangerous crimes that can occur. Home invasion is when thieves force their way into an occupied home or apartment to commit a robbery or other crimes. Home invaders prefer to work at night and on the weekends when homes are more likely to be occupied. They rarely work alone and rely on physical force to gain control and frighten the home occupant(s).

Once inside and in control, the invader will force occupants to open safes, provide valuables, obtain PIN numbers for bank cards and even take keys to the family car. Before leaving, they usually disable phones and will most likely bind the occupants using rope, duct tape or handcuffs.

Usually a home invader will enter through the front door or garage. Most often they will knock on the door or ring the doorbell knowing that the door will soon be opened. At this point they force themselves inside. However, sometimes they will simply kick open the door unannounced.



Methods of Gaining Entry

- Opened garage doors are an invitation for home invasion. The thief will drive around looking for those who leave their garage doors open and come back at a later time to assault the individual in his/her own garage. Once inside they close the garage door and gain entry into the home to continue this assault.
- Posing as someone needing help, needing to use a phone or bathroom, they gain access from unsuspecting occupants. They can also pose as home repairman, yard maintenance, survey takers or any other legitimate service provider. Once the door is open, they force their way inside.
- Sometimes a home invader will carjack a person and forces them to drive home where they will have easy access into the home.
- The home invader may chose to use a crowbar or similar tool to pry open a door or window.
- Using brute force, they can simply kick in the door. Properly done, it's a fairly easy thing to break open a door by kicking just above or below the doorknob. Deadbolts do little to prevent this.



Safety First

- A peep-hole in your door is a must. A wide-angled type is best. This will allow you to better view a stranger's identification.
- All of your valuable possessions should contain a mark that you can later easily identify if necessary.
- Although they do not provide a guarantee of safety it's still a good idea to have dead-bolt locks on all of your exterior doors.
- Always ask for identification. The ID should be able to slide under the door or easily viewed through a peep-hole. If the stranger is not able to provide ID, do not open the door.
- Always keep your garage door locked.
- Do not leave a key hidden outside near a door. Never leave a key under the mat, in a mailbox or over a door.
- If you're going to be away from home for more than a couple of days stop all deliveries including newspapers, mail or other items. Let a trusted neighbor know you will be away and when to expect you back. Put one or more indoor lights on timers. Arrange for lawn maintenance in your absence.
- If you notice someone who's acting suspicious, call the police.
- If you have a home alarm system, set the perimeter alarm whenever you're inside – especially at night.
- Keep all doors, windows and garages locked at all times.
- Never open your front door without knowing who's on the other side.
- Never rely on a chain-latch for security.

If You Become a Victim

- Cooperate
- Don't fight back
- Stay calm
- Pay attention. Look for identifying body marks like tattoos, scars, etc. Try to remember what they are wearing. Listen to their voices.
- As soon as they've left your home call the police.