

Protecting Your Home Windows



Windows

Most burglaries are carried out by opportunist thieves. In two out of 10 burglaries, they don't even have to use force—they get in through an open door or window. So fit strong locks to your doors and windows and make sure you always keep them fully locked.

Look at your home through a burglar's eyes. How would you get in if you'd forgotten your keys? If you can get in, so can a burglar. Are there places where they could break in without being seen? Would they have to make a lot of noise by breaking glass?

A third of burglars get in through a window.

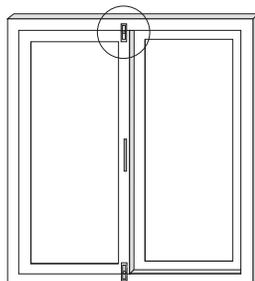
If you are replacing windows, consider using laminated glass, particularly in ground-floor and accessible windows, as this is much harder to break. Otherwise, window locks that can easily be seen from outside may put some thieves off, because the thief would have to break the glass and risk attracting attention. And even if they do break the window, they still can't open it so risk cutting themselves climbing through the broken glass. Home security and home improvement shops sell inexpensive, key-operated locks to fit most kinds of windows. You may need more than one window lock, depending on the size of the opening you need to secure.

Fit window locks with keys to all downstairs windows and windows that are easy to reach—for example, those above a flat roof or near a drainpipe.

Even small windows such as skylights or bathroom fanlights need locks. A thief can get through any gap that is larger than a human head.

Remember to keep windows locked. Remove the keys and keep them out of sight in a safe place.

Louvre windows are especially vulnerable because thieves can easily take the slats out of the frame. Glue



Keyed Slide Bolts

- **Materials Needed:** slide bolt, drill, screwdriver, screws
- **Install at top (or alternately, at both the top and bottom) of track, following the manufacturer's directions.**

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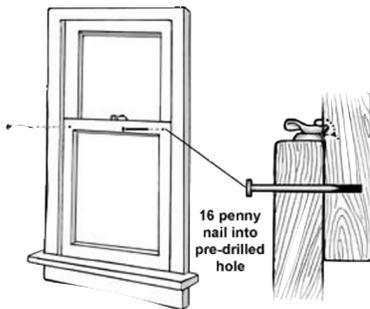
the slats into place, and fit a special louvre lock. Better still, replace them with fixed glass.

Before fitting locks to PVC-U or metal windows, talk to the installer to make sure this will not affect your warranty.



Casement locks make it harder to open windows without the correct key.

Fanlight locks have a metal bolt to secure the metal arm, which is used to open and close the window. Ideally though, you should not rely on these locks—fit a casement lock too.



The lock shown here fastens the two windows together. A more discreet version is embedded into the wooden frame. Or there are devices to stop the window opening beyond a certain limit.

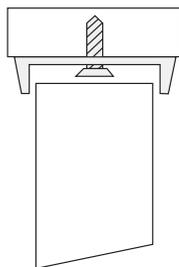
Double hung windows usually have a top half that can be lowered and a bottom half that can be raised.

- If the window is not to be used as a fire exit, you may secure it by nailing it or screwing it permanently closed.
- If the window must be opened or is needed for a fire exit, drill a downward angled hole for a removable pin or heavy nail to screw the two panes together: A second hole 2" above the first will let the window be opened for ventilation while remaining secure.

- A keyed latch may be installed in place of an unkeyed one.
- Grillwork or bars may be installed if the window is not to be used as a fire exit.

Casement and awning windows are opened by hinges mounted at the top, side, or bottom. These windows can easily be pried open by breaking the flimsy latch.

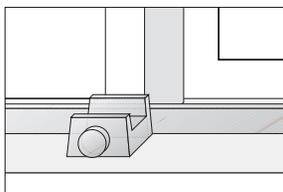
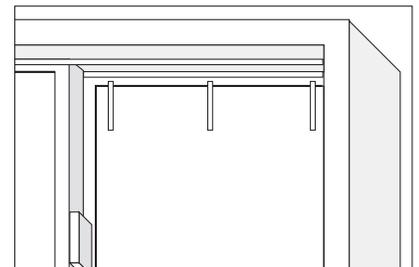
- Slide bolts installed with heavy duty screws can provide extra security while allowing the window to be opened when required.
- An "L" shaped bracket screwed to the lower part of the window with a removable steel pin inserted into the sill will prevent the window from being pried open.
- The crank handle can be removed or grill work can be installed if the window is not to be used as a fire exit.



Preventing Prying—Screws

• **Materials Needed:** drill, 1/4" drill bit, screwdriver, three 1 1/4" large head sheet metal screws per pane.

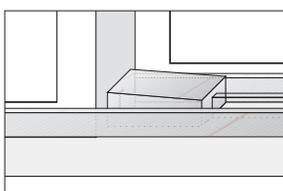
1. Slide window open.
2. Drill three holes inside the upper track. (see right)
3. Install the screws with their heads protruding straight down so that the sliding window just clears them. (see left)
4. Repeat steps for other half of window.



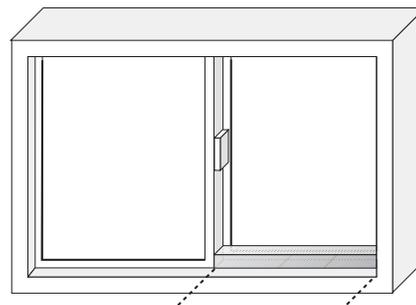
Preventing Movement On An Outside Track

Materials Needed: slide bolt, or locking anti-sliding block, drill, screwdriver, screws

- Slide Bolt



- Anti-Sliding Block



Preventing Movement On Inside Track—Window Bar
Measure and cut a piece of wood to fit snugly within the inside track. Insert the wood into the track to prevent the window from being opened.



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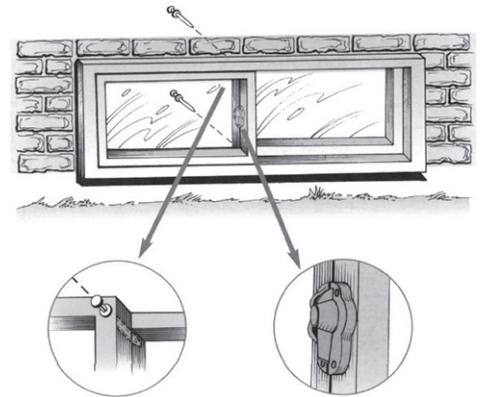
Basement Windows

Basement windows are particularly vulnerable to forced entry. The young persons responsible for most residential break and enters need very little space through which to enter a home. The poor quality of the window catch offers little resistance to the most casual attempt at entry.

Basement windows, even in a window well, will afford ample opportunity to a child or to a small adult who is breaking into your house. It stands to reason then that these entrances should be given as much attention for security improvements as other parts of your house.

Improving only the window catch is usually not sufficient as the hinges are fastened with short screws, the frame is often not anchored into the foundation wall, and the glass is single pane and is easily broken. Metal window bars and grills fastened to the foundation wall are the only truly effective means of properly securing basement windows.

There are many styles of window bars and different methods of installation. Some use non-removable screws, some have pins and some have a padlock. Make sure at least one set of window bars is installed in such a way that it can be removed from the inside as a fire exit. All other windows can have the bars installed permanently providing there is no danger.



Window Film

There is good evidence that alarms and cameras act as deterrents to crime. However, they don't actually prevent an intruder from getting in. These types of measures provide psychological security barriers.

Polyester films are bonded to existing glass, creating a barrier to intruders, "Like invisible bars," says Apex Window Films owner Dean Avey. According to Avey, security films take away a thief's main requirements, ease and speed. "An intruder can hit the glass with a rock or a crowbar, or whatever they happen to have with them. If they whack away at it a few times and find they can't get in chances are they leave—all that hitting makes a lot of noise and thieves don't want that kind of attention."



Discover what your existing glass can do for you!

While the glass will crack, the film and its bonding agents hold the window or door together to prevent it from breaking open.

A variety of window films are available, some include UV protection which offers fade protection for your furniture, drapes, carpets and more. They cut annoying glare and reduce up to 99% of the sun's harmful ultraviolet rays. They also reduce excessive heat gain through your windows and provide increased comfort and energy savings. Security films also prevent injury from glass fragments due to crime, destructive weather and terrorism.



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