

To fully enjoy your trip, plan appropriate home security with this check list.

#### Inside the house:

- Lock all doors and windows. Double-check just to be sure.
- Set timers on interior lights. This goes a long way in deterring burglars, who often look for crimes of opportunity. Don't allow your house to appear as if no one is home.
- Ask a neighbor or trusted friend to stop by and check on the house periodically.
- Don't make status updates. Never broadcast your location on Facebook, Twitter, or any other social media site. Even if you think that it's only your friends or colleagues viewing your online profiles, it's safest not to leave any sort of opening for a possible burglar.
- Alert your alarm company. If you have an automatic security system in place, call your representative, announcing you'll be away from home for an extended period of time. Make sure the alarm is set properly when you leave.
- Secure valuables. If you don't already have your jewelry or other valuables in a safe deposit box, now might be the time to do so. Doing this ensures you don't leave out anything valuable in plain sight that a burglar might be able to see from a window.
- Prevent power surges. You never know if a power surge can occur, so be prepared. Disconnect the computer, TV, stereo, and other electronics, or make sure they are plugged safely into a surge protector.
- Contact your local law enforcement agency and inquire if they offer periodic checks of the residence while you are gone.

#### Outside the house:

- Arrange for lawn care. Have your landscaping tended to by a friendly neighbor or local service. Before you leave, trim tree branches that might allow access to a climbing burglar.
- Stop newspapers and mail. Stop mail and newspaper deliveries, or have them regularly picked up by a neighbor. Again, you don't want to easily clue in a burglar to your absence by the mounting newspapers on your doorstep.
- Plan some exterior lighting. Set these lights on timers as well, to deter burglars.
- Don't leave spare keys outdoors. Collect any hidden spare keys from around the exterior of your home. Remember, burglars know the most popular hiding places, like beneath mats and in potted plants.
- Lock the garage. Even if there is no entrance to your house from the garage, there's still a chance for numerous things to be stolen. Secure the door and any entrances to the garage.