

Safety and security in your home



MISSION
AUSTRALIA | together
we stand



To be safe from crime and violence is a basic and essential right for everyone in our Mission Australia Housing communities.

Taking a few extra precautions and being prepared can go a long way to improve your feeling of safety when out in public spaces and at home.

Here are some simple tips we all can take to help protect ourselves, and our family and friends from the effects of crime.

Simple steps to a safer home

1. When you are at home or leaving home, lock all doors and windows. This includes sheds and garages.
2. Never leave keys in a hiding spot outside the home, instead leave spare keys with a trusted friend.
3. Engrave and record all details including, serial number, and descriptions of all items of value.
4. Don't keep large amounts of money in your home.
5. If you're going away, ask a neighbour, trusted friend or family member to keep an eye on your home.
6. Make sure your house number is clearly visible.
7. Keep your insurance up to date. Make sure that you're insured for the right amount to cover the replacement cost of your contents at today's prices.

Visitors

If you are unsure who it is, don't open the door.

If someone wants to use your phone for an emergency, offer to make the call for them, but don't invite them into your home.

Be suspicious of people who want to enter your home. Verify their identity.

Be aware

Unexpected visitors or callers can be friendly, but be aware that some may want to trick you out of your money or property or both. Things to be cautious of include:

Something for nothing

Any claims that you have won a contest

Cash only opportunities

Home improvement offers

Get rich quick schemes

'Service calls' you didn't request

Personal safety

Keep cash and valuables to a minimum.

Always keep your personal belongings close to your body and never leave them unattended.

If someone does attempt to take your property, don't resist.

Have your keys ready before you get to your home or car.

Be aware of your surroundings.



Banking

Vary the routine of your banking days, times and branches.

Protect your password and PIN.

Don't display cash in public.

Never carry large sums of money.

Identity theft

Shred and discard documents with personal information.

Keep your mail box secure and empty every day.

Be cautious about providing personal information over the phone or on the internet.

Travel safety

Travel along well lit roads, rather than side streets, back lanes or vacant blocks.

If you use public transport, wait in well-lit areas, near other people.

Park in a safe, well-lit area close to your destination.

For your safety, always cross at traffic signals and pedestrian crossings.

When driving, lock doors and windows and do not leave valuables in view.

Getting to Know Your Neighbours

When you live in an apartment, it is important for many reasons to get to know your neighbours. Living close by, your neighbours are usually just a hop, skip, and a jump away in the case of an emergency. While this means you may

have more foot traffic near your front door, it can also be a source of safety.

Here are some awesome things that neighbours can do for you:

1. Keep an eye out

If someone fishy is lurking around your apartment, a neighbour who knows you can call or text to let you know.

2. Check on you

If your neighbour hears alarming noises, struggle, or yelling, they're probably more willing to check on you if they know you. Otherwise, people tend to think that if they knock on your door, they'll just be bothering you. And if you really are in trouble, you want those neighbours coming to your door!

3. Receive packages when you're gone


It's easy for intruders to see that you're not home when you have packages piling up in front of your door. It can also be unsafe to leave unattended packages outside. But all these problems are solved if you have a neighbour friend who can collect packages for you.

4. Alert the authorities in case of emergency

If your neighbour hears noises but can't get a hold of you, or if something happens and you're not able to ask for help, a neighbour can alert the authorities without wasting time.

5. Keep a spare key

Keeping a key under the doormat is a bad idea, since it's the first place intruders will check, but it's a good idea to keep a spare key somewhere, in case you lose your keys or lock them in your car. Giving a key to a trusted neighbour is better than hiding it in that 'secret' place.



Your neighbours don't have to be your best friends, but it's a good idea to reach out to them. Not only can they lend you a hand, but they can also help you out in case of an emergency.

At the end of the day, if a neighbour hears you calling for help or if they hear a strange noise, they're more likely to check on you if you know each other. So, next time you are doing a bit of baking, head on over with an extra plate, and introduce yourself! Or just offer to lend a helping hand if you can.

Parking safety tips

Many thieves target cars in apartment complex lots. Most of the break-ins occur during the day, and it's easy for thieves to remain anonymous, since many cars and people come and go during the day. Items stolen are usually personal items and car parts, including music players, wallets, laptops, cash, and car stereo equipment.

Here are some handy car theft tips:

1. Avoid parking near shrubbery or large pillars

Try to park in areas where your car, and the area surrounding your car, is in plain view. It's easier for thieves to break into your car when they have the cover of shrubbery or pillars to hide behind.

2. Park in a well-lit area

Sometimes it's difficult to find an empty spot in a parking garage, let alone a good one. But if you can, park next to a light post to ensure your car is bathed in light, instead of hidden in a dark corner. This makes it more difficult for thieves to lurk in the shadows around your car.

3. Hide valuables

Don't leave any valuables in plain sight when you park. If you have shopping bags or a laptop in

your car, hide them under the seats, put them in the boot, or take them with you. Don't tempt thieves by putting your valuables on display.

4. Don't forget your mobile phone

It's easy to forget a charging mobile phone on the seat of your car or in the cup holder, but it's an invitation for a thief to break into your car. Before you leave your car, make sure you have your mobile phone on you.

5. Don't leave important documents

Be wary of leaving any important documents in your car, including bank statements or receipts with your credit card information. These kinds of documents can be used for identity theft. It may also be easier to keep your rego papers in your car, but if your car is stolen, having the rego papers makes it a lot easier for someone else to sell your car.

And remember.....

We're in and out of our cars so much that sometimes we can forget to do the little things that can make a big difference to our personal security. Lock your doors and roll up your windows every time you get out of your car. Put any valuables out of sight, or better yet, take them in to your home.

If you ever feel as though the parking area at a Mission Australia Housing complex is unsafe, please contact us immediately and we will work with you to improve the lighting, trim surrounding shrubbery and in some cases, install security cameras.

Contacts & further information

If you are a victim of crime, call or visit your local police station.

Triple Zero (000)

Call Triple Zero (000) in an emergency for Police, Fire or Ambulance

Crime Stoppers

☎ 1800 333 000

To report crime anonymously

Police Assistance Line

☎ 131 444

For non-emergencies

State Emergency Service

☎ 132 500

For storm and flood assistance

Mission Australia Housing has used reasonable endeavours to ensure that material in this document was correct at the time of printing. As details are subject to ongoing change, please contact your local Mission Australia Housing office for current information. Printed 2017.