Where You Live … How Secure is It?

Joseph F. Donnermeyer
Where You Live...How Secure Is It?

If you don’t know by now, then you really ought to know. Older Americans are more likely to be victims of break-ins and robberies where they live than almost any other age group.

We could quote you impressive numbers and statistics, but that is not the real issue. The real issue is what crime does to you:

- It makes you afraid!
- It makes you nervous!
- It takes away from your right to lead a good and productive life!

Where you live, for better or for worse, is your home. It will be a much better place to live if you practice good home security.

But who really cares? It seems that everyone these days is trying to tell you what to do. What do you need with another brochure? It’s just another piece of paper. You don’t need to read this. You can afford to be smug. After all, you are not a number in those complicated crime statistics.

- But we care about you!
- The police care about you!
- Your friends care about you!!
- Your family cares about you!!
- And you should care about yourself!!
If you care, then *please* read this brochure *CAREFULLY*. It is a short quiz that will help you spot-check how secure your home really is. Be good to yourself. Be honest with yourself as you answer each question.

*Don’t pretend*. And, *Please, don’t be smug.*

### Do You Have These Safety Features?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Some but not all</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Do all of your outside doors have deadbolt locks?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Can any of your outside door locks be opened by breaking out glass or a panel of light wood?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Do all of your outside doors have hinges that cannot be removed from the outside?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Do you have chain locks or other auxiliary locks on all your outside doors?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Do your outside basement doors have a heavy bolt that can be operated only from the inside?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Do the basement doors on the inside of your house have a heavy bolt?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Do you have a wide-angle doorviewer or peephole in your outside doors?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Do you have window locks or latches on first floor windows?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Do you have window locks or latches on second floor and basement windows?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Do you have an automatic timer device that will turn your lights on and off at different times of the night when you are not at home?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Do you have locks or latches on your garage windows?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Do all of your garage doors (or the entry to your tool shed) have a deadbolt type lock?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Do you have a place to store and lock up your ladders so that they cannot be used as an aid for climbing into your residence?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Do you have trellises, patio tables, and chairs that can be used as aids for climbing?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. If you are a woman and live alone, do you use your initials rather than your first name on your mailbox and your door and in the telephone book?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Do You Practice These Safety Habits?

16. Do you lock your outside doors at night before you go to bed?  
   Yes ☐  Sometimes ☐  No ☐

17. During the day when you are not asleep and are at home, do you keep your outside doors locked?  
   Yes ☐  Sometimes ☐  No ☐

18. Do you keep your basement doors locked during the day and at night before you go to bed?  
   Yes ☐  Sometimes ☐  No ☐

19. Do you look through the doorviewer or peephole every time you answer the door?  
   Yes ☐  Sometimes ☐  No ☐

20. When you leave your home for any period of time, do you lock all windows and doors?  
    Yes ☐  Sometimes ☐  No ☐

21. Are you sure that you or anyone else in your family does not hide the door key in such places as the mailbox or under the doormat?  
    Yes ☐  Sometimes ☐  No ☐

22. Do you close and lock your garage at night or when you are away from home for any length of time?  
    Yes ☐  Sometimes ☐  No ☐

23. Do you latch or lock your garage windows?  
    Yes ☐  Sometimes ☐  No ☐

24. Do you lock your car and take the key out even when it is parked in your garage?  
    Yes ☐  Sometimes ☐  No ☐

25. When you leave your car to be serviced, or at a parking lot, do you separate your home keys from your automobile keys?  
    Yes ☐  Sometimes ☐  No ☐

26. Do you know the phone number of the law enforcement agency that takes care of your home?  
    Yes ☐  Sometimes ☐  No ☐

27. Do you use your automatic timer device whenever you leave your house to go shopping, to a restaurant, to visit friends, etc.?  
    Yes ☐  Sometimes ☐  No ☐

28. Do you leave a radio or television on whenever you leave your home to go shopping, to a restaurant, to visit friends, etc.?  
    Yes ☐  Sometimes ☐  No ☐

29. Whenever you are going away for a day or so, do you arrange to have mail, milk, or newspaper deliveries discontinued or taken care of by a responsible neighbor or friend?  
    Yes ☐  Sometimes ☐  No ☐

30. Whenever you are going away for a day or so, do you make arrangements to have grass cut or snow shoveled?  
    Yes ☐  Sometimes ☐  No ☐

31. Whenever you are going away for a day or so, do you ask a responsible neighbor to keep a close watch on your house; and do you leave information on where you can be reached in an emergency?  
    Yes ☐  Sometimes ☐  No ☐

32. Whenever you are going away for a day or so, do you notify the police so that they can provide extra protection for your home?  
    Yes ☐  Sometimes ☐  No ☐
How many times did you answer YES? How many times did you answer NO? For each question that you could not ABSOLUTELY and FIRMLY say YES to, then you increase the chances that you will become part of those fancy crime statistics.

If you want more information, especially about those questions to which you answered NO, there are two more brochures. The gold brochure is titled “Safety Features For Your Home and Apartment: A Guide for Older Americans.” This brochure contains information about simple security devices for where you live. There is nothing expensive or complicated about the things it discusses.

The orange brochure is titled “Things You Can Do For Free: A Guide to Better Home and Apartment Security for Older Americans.” This brochure will talk about things that don’t cost you one penny, but can still help you provide better security for where you live.