

Do you have a privacy fence that obstructs your neighbors' view of your backyard? Are your fence crossrails on the outside presenting a stepladder-type entry into your backyard? What about your gate - is it secured?

Privacy fencing is a disadvantage to home security since it provides concealment. Other forms of fencing would eliminate this disadvantage, but here are some methods to offset this problem:

1. Remove every other slat along the alley side of the fence to allow greater visibility.
2. Plant a hostile-type plant to cover the outside of the fence, (i.e., climbing roses with large thorns or pyracantha).
3. Padlock your gate so that entry is made more difficult (for more information, see section on padlocks).

If your fence has not been built, have the installer place the crossrails on the inside of the fence.

**NOW THAT WE'VE WALKED AROUND THE OUTSIDE OF YOUR HOUSE,
LET'S GET READY TO GO INSIDE AND LOOK FOR QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

Let's go to the front door – as I walk up to the door, can you see me from the inside? Do you know who is outside before you open it?

A good idea here is to install a wide-angle viewer (peephole) in the door. This will let you know who is on the outside before the door is open. (A 190-degree view is recommended).

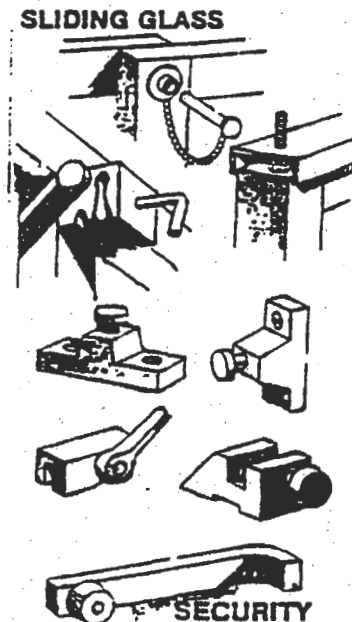
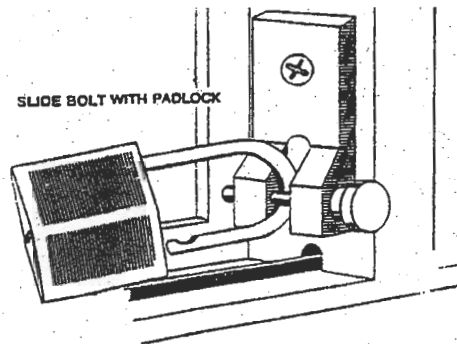
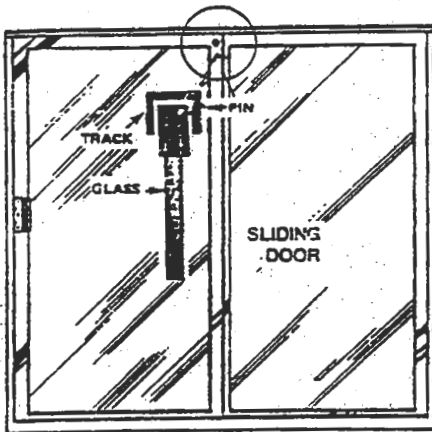
Now, how about that door? Is it solid core? Is it metal? Is it cracked or splitting? How thick is it?

Not only your front door, but also all of your exterior doors and the door between your house and the garage should be of solid core construction or heavy gauge metal with a minimum thickness of 1 3/8 inches. A thinner door may give if kicked. And if your door is the panel-type, make sure joints haven't come unglued and panels are not split or rotten.

While we are looking at the door, let's have a look at the strike plate on the doorframe. Is yours of lightweight metal installed with short wood screws?

Other types of doors in the home must also be adequately secured. Sliding glass doors are particularly vulnerable to attacks by burglars.

Secure sliding doors to keep them from sliding or being pried up and out of the track by Pinning: -- Drill a slightly downward sloping hole through top portion of the sliding door frame. Insert a pin as illustrated. This will help secure the door from being pried open. To keep it from being lifted out of its track you can place two or three screws in the top track that allow just enough room for the door to open and close but will not allow the door to be lifted.



Now that we've been through most of your house, let's go into your garage and have a look around. We've already discussed the point that the door from your house into your garage should be secured with a deadbolt lock and should be of the same construction as exterior doors. Now that we're in the garage, how about the garage door itself? Is it deteriorating and easily bypassed? Does it have windows? How about a garage door opener? Does the cord release for your garage door opener hang by the door when your door is closed? Most garage doors, due to their construction, are difficult to secure. Several recommendations can be made, however:

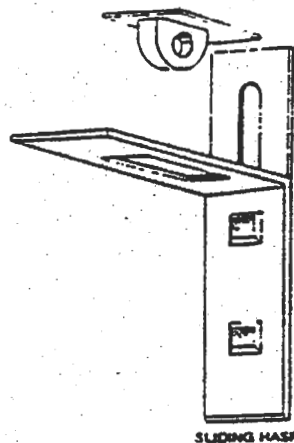
Keep garage doors closed and locked at all times.

Remove any knobs or rings from an automatic garage door release. With these in place, an intruder can place a coat hanger through the top of the garage door and pull the cord (or break a window and reach in), releasing the garage door from the track.

Cover the garage window to prevent persons from viewing inside. It makes it more difficult for someone to determine whether you are home or not. Mirrored film on your windows allows you to see out but doesn't allow them to see in.

While on vacation, place a padlock through the track. If your door is deteriorating or you are considering replacement, a windowless garage metal door provides the most security.

And while we're in the garage, let's look up. Do you have an attic access in the garage? If your attic access is in the garage and another inside your residence, the garage attic access should be secured. This can be accomplished by adding a case-hardened hinging hasp and padlock. This prevents an intruder from going through the attic, if he does get into the garage.



NOTE: WE HAVE ATTACHED A SECURITY CHECKLIST AT THE END OF THIS MANUAL FOR YOU TO EVALUATE YOUR HOME SECURITY.