

# Happy Holidays!

# FACTSHEET



While the holidays can be a time for family and friends to get together and celebrate the season, for some it can also be a time when burglary and car crime can increase. Darker nights, empty houses and presents on view can all contribute to this.

Home Office and Scottish Executive figures show that burglary and car crime actually increase during the festive period, and this Factsheet gives you a few suggestions to help you keep the season jolly.

## Deck the halls with boughs of holly

If you leave your home empty at Christmas, it means you could be at greater risk of being burgled.

At the same time, leaving presents and valuables in your car or presents visible under the Christmas Tree makes your car or your home a shop window for any opportunist thief who comes along.

But there are some things that you can do which would help prevent this – and help make the holiday time a safe and happy one.

- Always remember to lock everything away in the boot of your car. Remember – it might not even be valuable – but how does a potential thief know that?
- Mark expensive presents, such as electronic equipment, with your postcode by engraving or using a UV pen. Ask your local crime prevention officer for the latest

property marking advice for a range of different surfaces (like glass or silver).

- Consider insuring valuable property, or taking photographs as this will help in identifying anything that is stolen.
- Remember that thieves will be on the look-out for presents – so don't leave these under the Christmas Tree in view of the window. Hide them somewhere safe until you need them (which makes them more of a surprise too!).
- If you are at home or you are away, remember to keep back doors locked and use your window locks.
- Keep an eye out for vulnerable and elderly people over Christmas.
- Make sure you use your doorchain when you open your door to strangers, and ask for identification – and check it.

**THIS FACTSHEET INCLUDES INFORMATION ON:**

- How to keep you properly safe over the holiday period
- A check list of seasonal tips
- What to do if you're away

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## 'Tis the season to be jolly

The holiday season is a time when many people are away visiting family and friends or simply getting some winter sun. Unfortunately, it is also a time when burglaries increase.

There are things that you can do to make your communities safer over the holiday period when you are away.

- Tell your neighbours that you will be away, and ask them to look after your house. One useful thing they could do is to make sure any newspapers or mail are pushed properly through your letter box, and that deliveries are not left on your doorstep.
- Tell your Neighbourhood Watch scheme that you will be away and ask them to keep an eye out for you.
- Buy some timers for your lights, radio and TV so it looks like you are at home. You can pick these up cheaply from any DIY store.
- Cancel the milk and papers while you are away.
- Hide and lock up any presents or valuables while you are away. Most burglars are looking for easy pickings.
- Enjoy your time away!

[www.neighbourhoodwatch.net](http://www.neighbourhoodwatch.net)



# Check list

Here is a checklist that you could use to make your home safer over the holiday period. With a few simple precautions, Happy Holidays can be yours too!



**Have you:**

- Told your Neighbourhood Watch scheme when you will be away**
- Set timers for lights, TV and radio**
- Kept presents and valuables away from windows and outside viewing**
- Locked your car in the garage**
- Cancelled the newspaper and milk deliveries**
- Asked your neighbours to collect your post, or to push it through the letterbox properly**
- Locked all external doors, and window locks on all opening windows**
- Locked your shed and locked away all tools and ladders**
- Installed outside lighting**