



Vacation Checklist: Prepare Your Home

Office of Neighborhood Involvement Crime Prevention Program • portlandoregon.gov/oni/cp • Spring 2016

When you plan for an upcoming vacation, one of the most important security considerations is making it appear that someone is home. Burglars typically don't target homes that are occupied. The checklist below will help you prepare your home before you leave for vacation.

Hold your mail during your vacation at holdmail.usps.com/holdmail . If you have an unlocked mailbox, ask your neighbor to check your box periodically in case the request wasn't processed.	
Stop newspaper delivery.	
Make sure that <u>no</u> packages are sent to your home while you're out. If you must have one delivered while you're on vacation, send it to someone who can sign for it.	
Don't announce your vacation on social media before or during your vacation. Post your pictures and trip information after you return.	
Place travel alerts on your credit cards. Consider only taking the ones that you plan to use. Hide the remaining ones in a location where a burglar isn't likely to look for them or store them in a safe deposit box.	
Notify your trusted immediate neighbors that you will be on vacation even for weekend getaways. Ask them to watch your home and call the police if someone is loitering around your home or behaving suspiciously. If there will be visitors at your place during your vacation, inform your neighbors and Neighborhood Watch members.	
Arrange for a neighbor to place your garbage bins out on trash day and return them after trash pick up. If you will be gone on an extended vacation, ask your neighbors to use them.	
Place indoor lights on automatic timers. The benefit of lights and other devices on timers is that the activity creates an appearance that someone is home. You want the lights that are visible from outside to switch on and off at various times throughout the day. If you can activate them remotely, this is another option.	
If you have dusk-to-dawn exterior lighting and/or motion detector lighting, you will not have to worry about placing timers on exterior lighting. Otherwise use timers. When outside lights are left on for the entire vacation, it becomes obvious that no one is around.	
Place televisions and radios on automatic timers as well. Make sure that sound is just audible from the porch or other areas around your home, but the source can't be determined. Talk radio is a good option because it's more likely to sound like a conversation.	

Arrange for someone to park in your driveway to generate activity at your home.	
Arrange for a relative or trusted neighbor to check on your house occasionally to make sure everything is okay and also make it look occupied.	
Have neighbors remove circulars or advertisements placed on your door.	
Maintain landscaping. Unkempt yards indicate that you are away.	
Provide a phone number where you can be reached to trusted neighbors while you are gone.	
Consider hiring a housesitter during your leave.	
If you have a monitored alarm system, make sure your emergency contact information is up to date. Inform the company if you are having a housesitter watch your residence. Make sure that housesitters know how to activate and deactivate the alarm and what to do to clear false alarms.	
If you monitor your camera surveillance system, determine how this will be handled while you are gone.	
Consider storing valuable items such as jewelry or financial and personal information in a safe deposit box.	
If you are traveling abroad, check out our “Vacation Checklist: Traveling Abroad” at portlandoregon.gov/oni/cpAdvice .	

City of Portland’s Crime Prevention Program

Ask for the Crime Prevention Program Coordinator for your Portland Neighborhood at 503-823-4064 or onicpa@portlandoregon.gov.

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