

# New Homeowner Security Checklist



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## Immediate Actions (Day 1-3)

### **Priority: Change All Locks**

**Why:** Previous owners, contractors, real estate agents may have keys

- ☐ Front door deadbolt - Upgrade to Grade 1 if needed
- ☐ Back door locks - Include sliding door bars
- ☐ Side gate locks - Often overlooked but critical
- ☐ Garage door locks - Manual and automatic
- ☐ Windows - Ensure all locking mechanisms work
- ☐ Spare key locations - Remove any hidden keys

**LAW Security Tip:** We can recommend trusted local locksmiths or integrate smart locks into your security system.

### **Assess Your Property**

**Walk your property with security in mind**

#### Exterior Check:

- ☐ Lighting - Dark areas around home?
- ☐ Landscaping - Bushes blocking windows?
- ☐ Fencing - Secure and in good repair?
- ☐ Entry points - How many ways in?
- ☐ Visibility - Can neighbors see your doors?
- ☐ Tools/ladders - Remove anything that aids break-ins

#### Interior Check:

- ☐ Window locks - All functional?
- ☐ Door frames - Solid and secure?
- ☐ Basement/attic access - Properly secured?
- ☐ Garage entry - Connected to house?

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## Week 1 Actions

### Update Emergency Information

- ☐ Change alarm codes (if system exists)
- ☐ Update monitoring contacts with new residents
- ☐ Program new phone numbers into existing system
- ☐ Test all sensors to ensure they work
- ☐ Locate main breaker and water shut-off
- ☐ Find monitoring company info (if existing system)

### Get to Know Your Neighborhood

- ☐ Meet immediate neighbors - They're your first line of defense
- ☐ Join neighborhood apps (Nextdoor, Facebook groups)
- ☐ Locate nearest police station
- ☐ Find hospital/urgent care routes
- ☐ Identify neighborhood watch - Join if available

### Insurance & Documentation

- ☐ Review homeowner's insurance - Does it cover theft/damage?
- ☐ Document valuables - Photos and serial numbers
- ☐ Create home inventory - Store in cloud
- ☐ Get security system discount - Can save 15-20%
- ☐ Understand deductibles - How much you'd pay out of pocket

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## Week 2-3 Actions

### Enhance Physical Security

- ☐ Install door viewers (peepholes) if missing
- ☐ Add door chains/bars for additional security
- ☐ Secure sliding doors - Bar in track, pin in frame
- ☐ Window security film - Makes glass harder to break
- ☐ Motion sensor lights - Especially for dark areas
- ☐ Security cameras - Focus on entry points first

### Landscape for Security

- ☐ Trim bushes below 3 feet near windows
- ☐ Remove ladder-like landscaping near second story
- ☐ Add thorny plants under windows (natural deterrent)
- ☐ Ensure lighting isn't blocked by vegetation
- ☐ Secure outdoor furniture - Can't be used to climb

### Consider Professional Security

- ☐ Get security assessments from 2-3 companies
- ☐ Compare monitoring options - Local vs. national
- ☐ Understand response times - Critical for effectiveness
- ☐ Review contract terms - No long-term traps
- ☐ Check references - Especially in your neighborhood

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## Week 4 Actions

### Create Family Safety Plan

- ☐ Emergency contact list - Posted in visible location
- ☐ Escape routes planned - Two from each room
- ☐ Meeting spot designated - If separated during emergency
- ☐ Important documents secured - Safe or safety deposit box
- ☐ Emergency kit prepared - Water, food, flashlights, radio
- ☐ Family communication plan - How to reach each other

### Smart Security Integration

- ☐ Smart doorbell - See who's there when away
- ☐ Smart locks - Remote access and monitoring
- ☐ Smart lighting - Programmable for vacation mode
- ☐ Smart garage opener - Never wonder if it's closed
- ☐ Home automation - Integrate all smart devices

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## San Antonio Specific Tips

### **Local Considerations**

#### **Weather Preparedness**

- ☐ Storm shutters/protection - Hail and wind damage
- ☐ Generator preparation - Power outage security
- ☐ Flood zones - Know your risk level
- ☐ Heat considerations - Electronic component placement

#### **Local Resources:**

- ☐ SAPD alarm permit - Required for monitored systems (\$50/year)
- ☐ HOA security rules - Some restrict camera placement
- ☐ City ordinances - Fence height, lighting restrictions
- ☐ Utility emergency numbers - CPS Energy, SAWS

### **Neighborhood Types**

#### **Historic Areas (King William, Monte Vista):**

- ☐ Older homes may need security upgrades
- ☐ Historic preservation rules may limit modifications
- ☐ Higher pedestrian traffic requires a different approach

#### **New Developments (Stone Oak, Alamo Ranch):**

- ☐ Often have HOA security requirements
- ☐ Modern infrastructure supports advanced systems
- ☐ Community-wide security planning opportunities

#### **Rural Areas (Outside Loop 1604):**

- ☐ Longer emergency response times
- ☐ May need more comprehensive independent systems
- ☐ Consider property perimeter protection

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## Monthly Maintenance Checklist

### System Maintenance

- ☐ Test all sensors - Door, window, motion
- ☐ Check batteries - Replace before they're dead
- ☐ Test cameras - Clean lenses, check angles
- ☐ Update contact info - Phone numbers, emergency contacts
- ☐ Review activity logs - Look for patterns or issues
- ☐ Test backup systems - Cellular, battery backup

### Property Maintenance

- ☐ Check locks - Ensure smooth operation
- ☐ Inspect lighting - Replace bulbs, clean fixtures
- ☐ Trim vegetation - Maintain clear sight lines
- ☐ Check fencing - Repair damage immediately
- ☐ Update documentation - New valuables, changes

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## Red Flags to Watch For

### Immediate Concerns

Call LAW Security immediately if you notice:

- ☐ Repeated false alarms - Could indicate tampering
- ☐ Suspicious neighborhood activity - Unfamiliar people casing homes
- ☐ System malfunctions - Sensors not responding properly
- ☐ Previous security signs - From unknown companies (could be fake)

### When to Call Professionals

- ☐ You feel overwhelmed by security options
- ☐ Existing system doesn't work properly
- ☐ Neighbors report recent break-ins
- ☐ You want integrated smart home features
- ☐ You're leaving town frequently

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