

New Homeowner Security Checklist



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