

THINGS YOUR BURGLAR WONT TELL YOU: HOW BAD GUYS IDENTIFY THEIR NEXT VICTIM

- Of course I look familiar. I was here just last week cleaning your carpets, painting your shutters, selling magazine subscriptions or delivering your new refrigerator.
- Hey, thanks for letting me use the bathroom when I was working in your yard last week. While I was in there, I unlatched the back window to make my return a little easier.
- Those yard toys your kids leave out always make me wonder what type of gaming system they have.
- Yes, I really do look for newspapers piled up on the driveway. And I might leave a pizza flier in your front door to see how long it takes you to remove it.
- Hey, your is car parked in the driveway. I will use the garage door opener in your car to activate the garage door—even when the car ignition is off. So you may want to turn your garage door opener (power) off from inside the garage when you're home.
- If decorative glass is part of your front entrance, don't let your alarm company install the control pad where I can see if it's set. That makes it too easy.
- A good security company alarms the window over the sink. And the windows on the second floor, which often access the master bedroom—and your jewelry. It's not a bad idea to put motion detectors up there too.
- It's raining, you're fumbling with your umbrella, and you forget to lock your door—understandable. But understand this: I don't take a day off because of bad weather.
- I always knock first. If you answer, I'll ask for directions somewhere or offer to clean your gutters. (Don't take me up on it.)
- Do you really think I won't look in your sock drawer? I always check dresser drawers, the bedside table and the medicine cabinet.
- I always check the freezer—and not for food!
- Here's a helpful hint: I almost never go into kids' rooms.
- You're right: I won't have enough time to break into that safe where you keep your valuables. But if it's not bolted down, I'll take it with me.
- A loud TV or radio can be a better deterrent than the best alarm system. If you're reluctant to leave your TV on while you're out of town, you can buy a device that works on a timer and simulates the flickering glow of a real television.
- Sometimes I carry a clipboard. Sometimes I dress like a lawn guy and carry a rake. I do my best to never, ever look like a crook.
- The two things I hate most: loud dogs and nosy neighbors.

- I'll break a window to get in, even if it makes a little noise. If your neighbor hears one loud sound, he'll stop what he's doing and wait to hear it again. If he doesn't hear it again, he'll just go back to what he was doing. It's human nature.
- I'm not complaining, but why would you pay all that money for a fancy alarm system and leave your house without setting it?
- I love looking in your windows. I'm looking for signs that you're home, and for flat-screen TVs or gaming systems I'd like. I'll drive or walk through your neighborhood at night, before you close the blinds, just to pick my targets.
- Avoid announcing your vacation on your Facebook page. It's easier than you think to look up your address.
- To you, leaving that window open just a crack during the day is a way to let in a little fresh air. To me, it's an invitation.
- If you don't answer when I knock, I try the door. Occasionally, I hit the jackpot and walk right in.
- If I am ambitious enough to invade your home while you are there, you may want to consider "answering" my door knock through the door: "Hello—who are you—no, I don't want any—go away or I'll call the police." And I will go away. So do not open it! If I hear your voice speaking with me, I will move on to another home that may let me in.
- Maybe I will work with someone claiming to sell magazine subscriptions. I always know when someone is home by knocking on the door.
- I look to see if your trash cans are put out on trash day or I'll look to see if anyone has taken in the trash cans by nightfall. That's a dead giveaway that no one is home.
- I might leave a pizza flyer in your front door to see how long it takes you to remove it.
- Those car keys you left in the ignition or on the hook in the garage allow me to drive away from your house in luxury with your property and your car.
- I love computer laptops; they're easy to carry and easy to sell. But, I fear that you had enough sense to install a locator program to locate your laptop such as [LoJack](#) for laptops, MobileMe for an Apple computer, iPad or iPhone.
- I love homes that are not well lit! Or homes with overgrown bushes and shrubbery so I can hide if someone walks or drives by. Have adequate exterior lighting. A motion-sensitive light is recommended for backyards.
- And when I get rid of what I have stolen, I know that hardly anyone keeps serial numbers or has engraved their ID on anything anymore. Keep a detailed inventory of your valuable possessions, including a description of the items, date of purchase and original value, and serial numbers, and keep a copy in a safe place away from home. This is a good precaution in case of fires or other disasters, too. Make a photographic or video record of valuable objects, heirlooms and antiques. Your insurance company can provide assistance in making and keeping your inventory.
- And I love neighborhoods where the neighbors do not talk to one another. They have no idea what's going on! **PLEASE DON'T FORM A NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH!!!!!!**