

## Garage Security

If the garage is attached, does the overhead door have an outside keyway? The most secure garage lock is one which is applied inside and has no outside keyway.

Garage door openers are vulnerable to manipulation with electronic devices; if the overhead door is opener-equipped, is it a current technology system with multi-channel (owner-selectable) coding? Can it conveniently be turned off for vacations? If not, it can always be unplugged. If it is an existing system, make certain the previous owner has not installed an outside button for convenience. If there is one, disconnect it.

If there is a side door to the garage, is it a solid-core wood or metal door? Is it equipped with a deadbolt lock with an inside keyway (to prevent operation from the outside)? If you are building a home, consider putting in a garage side door without windows, and use better illumination. Garage side doors are often outside the fence line, and anyone can look into the garage and know there is no one home if there is no vehicle inside.

Is the door between the garage and the house a solid-core wood or metal door? Deadbolt? Open inward (or have pinned or non-removable pin hinges)? If the attic access is in the garage, is it equipped with a lock?

If possible, overhead garage doors should not have an exterior key way which could be manipulated, drilled or picked by a thief. Whenever possible garage locks should be mounted on the inside with no exterior key. Make sure all panels on the garage door are secure. Unfortunately, many overhead garage doors have panels which are only held in place with molding and can be easily knocked in.

Garage door openers offer some protection but are inherently vulnerable to manipulation with electronic devices. Some criminals will just drive around with a variety of garage door remotes, pressing the buttons as they pass each home. Once a match is found they can plan to return when no one is home. If the overhead door has an electronic opener it should be a modern system with multi-channel owner-selectable coding. The system should be able to be locked or turned off when you are away on vacations. If not the system can always be unplugged when going on a trip.

Side doors to any attached garage, should be exterior rated solid wood or metal doors. They should also be equipped with quality deadbolt locks. It's recommended that these doors be windowless. Many times these doors are located outside the backyard fence line, so anyone could easily look into the garage and know not only what property you keep there, but also if you are home by the absence of your car.

Any window to the attached garage should be protected with an alarm, and non-breakable security film.

Any door between the garage and the house should also be solid wood or metal. Again, a deadbolt and frame reinforcement is recommended. If the door opens outward its hinges should be non-removable, or pinned for additional security. Keep in mind that the overhead garage door is difficult to adequately secure. Even with locks in place, a persistent thief can usually break through with little to no effort. It's the door between the house and the garage that must defeat the criminal.

Non attached garages and sheds are often full of expensive tools, which burglars may steal. These tools could also be put to use in

order to break into the main house. It's therefore highly recommended to lock sheds securely and also lock up any items like ladders, which could aid thieves in accessing upstairs windows.

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