Do you Live in a Burglar-Friendly House?

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It's the last thing you want to hear when you've just been burgled, but the awful truth is that if you've been burgled once, you'll probably be burgled again. In fact, it's likely to happen another four or five times. Why? Because some of us have "**burglar-friendly**" houses.

1

Burglars think that the bigger the house, the richer the **owners**. "You can't do much about the size of your house," says Professor Pease of Huddersfield University, "but if it's large, you need to be even more careful than if it's small."

2

You should take a good look at your house – not as you **normally** do, but as a burglar would. If you were a burglar, which home would you choose to **rob**, – a house with a shiny new car parked outside or one with a rusty **vehicle**? Anything which **signals** nice possessions and money will certainly catch the burglar's **eye**.

3

People may complain about their nosy neighbours, but there's no better way of stopping burglars than having watchful neighbours around. If a house is far away from others, or **hidden** from the road, it is more **attractive** to burglars, who think they can get in and out without being noticed. So a burglar alarm is a good idea. And remember, you may get **privacy** from a tall **hedge** or a high wall - but so does a burglar.

4

Ian Stephen, who works with the Scottish prison service, believes that you're more at **risk** if your house looks nice. "Window-boxes, nice curtains and beautifully painted walls all tell the burglar that you're **proud** of your home and care about your possessions and are more likely to have nice things in your house," he says. He advises people to try to make **their** homes look as plain as possible and not to draw attention to any new things they have bought by leaving the empty boxes next to the **dustbin.**



5

People often leave a light on when they go out. "But be sensible," advises Ian Stephen. "Don't leave a light on in the hall as it never makes the burglars believe that you're in. Have you ever heard of a family enjoying an evening at home in the hall? Leave it on in the living room." An open window is also an open invitation to burglars. If you sometimes forget to shut and **lock** doors and windows, **stick** a note on the inside of the front door to **remind** you. And make sure any **ladders** are **put away** and not left outside where burglars can use them.

6

By leaving newspapers and letters **sticking out** of the letter-box, or full milk bottles on the **doorstep**, you are giving burglars the green light to break into your home. Similarly, if you're away from the house at regular times - out at work or doing the shopping - then your home is also in danger of being burgled. Ask a neighbour to **keep an eye on** your house at these times.

7

It's a good idea to take photos of your valuable possessions. By doing that, if you're burgled, you'll be able to identify stolen **property**, which could lead to the thief being put behind bars. It is also possible to **label** valuable items such as TVs and videos with your **postcode**. If they are stolen, this will make them easier to find. One more good idea is to ask for a **crime prevention officer** to visit your home and identify weak points in its **security**.

Reading

You are going to read a magazine article about burglar-friendly houses. Choose from the list A-I the sentence which best summarises each part (1-7) of the article. There is one extra sentence which you do not need to use. There is an example at the beginning (0).

A Houses which are very private are less safe.
B Make your possessions easy to identify.
C The first time you have your house broken into probably won't be the last.
D Burglars look at our houses differently to the way we do.
E Draw attention to your home to make it burglar-proof.
F Burglars are attracted by signs of absence.
G Large homes suggest large bank accounts.
H Lock up and turn the lights on.
I Don't let the outside show what's inside.