

Home Security Assessment

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1. Introduction

Your security - whose responsibility is it? This is a divisive question and the sooner you decide whose responsibility it is, the better. In general we tend to think that the government is responsible and in a perfect world it would be. The question is, is this a perfect world?

This is no way that we can expect the police to provide for our safety needs, that is, personally, as a community or as a business. We need to incorporate security planning and awareness into our daily routine. It must be a natural part of our daily lives and we dare not shy away from it. We must teach it to our families and plan for it.

2. Purpose.

Not everyone can be an expert. For this reason we need to do some serious research when dealing with our safety. This is even more important dealing with our home safety.

The home is of course, a place where we want to feel safe and secure. To ensure that we are safe, we install fences, burglar bars, security gates and burglar alarms. Having done all this, we sit at home watching TV or sleeping at night, thinking that our home is impregnable. Nothing can be further from the truth.

These precautions that we take are purely that, precautions, a deterrent, something to stop the opportunistic thief. If a hardened criminal believes that there is something of significant value in our home, make no error, he will try to gain entry, whether we are home or not.

The purpose of this home security assessment sheet is to give an indication of where the weaknesses are in your security. It is not all-inclusive, nor infallible, but merely gives an indication of your security readiness and what you could possibly do to address the shortcomings.

Read the instructions in each paragraph. Answer the questions as honestly and accurately as you can. Make an honest assessment when giving points to each paragraph, this is not a pass or fail test. It is *more*, it deals the safety of you and your family.

The point ratings for each section is out of 5, with the 0 being non-existent and 5 being close to perfect. The total score at the end of the survey indicates your average security preparedness. Do not place a lot of faith in the score. The idea will be to get four and above for each section. If you get four and above for most sections, but have ones and twos for one or two others, this could give you a high score but you could have serious flaws in your security which would not be shown by your score.

IMPORTANT! ONCE YOU HAVE STARTED THIS ASSESSMENT, DO NOT LEAVE IT LYING AROUND. COMPLETE YOU'RE ASSESSMENT, NOTE YOUR SHORTCOMING AS A TO DO LIST IN ITEM 11 ON THE LAST PAGE.

KEEP THE LAST PAGE AND DESTROY THE REST OF THIS ASSESSMENT.

3. Perimeter.

Starting at the entrance, have a look at your gate. If you do not have a gate you score 0. If you have a gate that is unlocked the score would be 1. If you have a gate that is kept locked in but it is low and can be jumped over, your score would be 2. If you have a high gate that is kept locked, but that does not give your view to the other side, your score is 3. If you have a high gate that gives you a view to the other side, such as Palisade, but it is a manual gate, you also get 3. The same high Palisade gate with a remote control will give you a 4. To get a 5 you would need to have what is known as a vacuum gate. This is the same Palisade gate with remote-control that allows you to enter but you stop at a second gate, once you are inside the external gate. The second gate only opens once the external gate is closed.

Gate Score

Describe gate:

Now check your perimeter fence. This is to be evaluated much the same as your gate. No fence is a 0. A poorly constructed, old, low or rusty fence gives you a 1 or 2, depending on its condition, height and material that it is made from. A high concrete wall that gives no visibility to the opposite side will give you a 3 (remember this is not about whether or not you like your privacy. It is strictly about security). A six-foot Palisade fence with a concrete plinth below the wall or an electric fence above will give you a 4. A six-foot Palisade type fence with a concrete plinth below and an electric fence or bayonet wire above will give you a 5.

Fence Score

Describe Fence:

Gate Lock

The Gate Lock is one of the biggest failures in the security system. The keys are left lying all over. A spare key is often not accounted for. The domestic servant has a key for which she can be coerced into handing over, for a duplicate to be made, by anybody wanting to gain entry. It is not that our domestic servants are always disloyal, but when their lives or the lives of the family put under threat, they would in most cases hand over the keys and any other information that is required.

Gate Lock Score

Describe the Gate Lock:

4. Main House.

The main house is broken down into 13 sections and we will deal with these individually.

i. Doors

Front Door: you rate your front door on a scale of 1 to 5, 5 being a solid wooden door without panels or glass panels. The low quality masonite doors which are frequently used for backdoors and internal doors will give you a 2.

Front door score

Describe your front door:

Backdoor: score the backdoor using the same method as for the front door.

Backdoor score

Describe your backdoor:

ii. Windows

How secure are your window catches, do they come loose when they are knocked repeatedly from outside? Any window, whether it opens or not, that does not have a burglar guard gets your windows a total of 0. Any window with a Burglar bar that you can fit you two fists through, side by side, both horizontally and vertically, gets your windows a 2. See Why [HERE](#)

Score your windows

Describe your windows and Burglar bars:

iii. Sleeping areas

All your sleeping areas, used or not, count out of a total of 5. Deduct a point for every window without a burglar guard, a door that does not close or does not lock. Deduct another point if doors do not have Keys in them.

Sleeping Area Score:

Describe Sleeping area:

iv. Alarms

If you have an alarm system that works, is monitored by Telephone and wireless, has an audible alarm and is monitored with armed response then you get a 5. Deduct a point for each item that you do not have.

Alarm Score

Describe your alarm:

v. CCTV

CCTV, although not the norm, is becoming more affordable for most households. As such it would be advisable to have, as a minimum, a camera

with which you can see who is at your front gate or at your front door. One working CCTV camera will get to 3. Two or more working cameras will get you 5.

CCTV score

Describe your CCTV system:

vi. Electronics (TVs, computers and radios)

This section, together section vii, is the biggest drawcard for housebreakers. This is where they make their money. If you have TVs, computers radios X boxes and the like are easily visible from the Windows, especially to passes by, you are high-risk. But this does not stop here. Every time you buy a new appliance such as the large screen TV and you have it delivered to your house by the shop, you are placing yourself at risk. It is a well-known fact that these details are used by the contractor himself or sold to those who wish to use it. Often you will find your home broken into within a month of buying a new electronic item that has been delivered by the shop's contractor. Where possible, ask a friend with a suitable vehicle to help you collect rather than have it delivered.

If you do not have net curtains or if your electronic equipment is visible from the road give yourself a 0. If movable electronics (game consoles, laptops etc) are locked in cupboards and out of view, give yourself a 3. If your electronic equipment was not delivered to your house, is not visible from the road, and you do not have a domestic servant, give yourself a 5.

Electronic score

Describe your electronics and where they are kept:

vii. Weapons

This is an emotional issue and you will find it difficult to grade. If a weapon is locked in a safe at night while you were sleeping, what good is it to you if you wake up to find somebody in your room? I believe that a weapon should be within reach but out of sight to everyone else when you are asleep in bed. I

also believe that a weapon should be carried concealed. The fewer people that know that you have a weapon, the less of a target you are.

For this item you get a 0, 3 or 5. If your weapon is locked in a safe at night or lying open for all to see, you get a zero. If you wear it concealed when you carry it you get a 3. If your weapon is available at night but out of sight, you get a 5.

Weapon score

Describe your practice of safekeeping your weapon:

viii Gun Safe

If you own a weapon where is your gun safe installed? In plain view =0, hidden and only you have a key=3 or hidden and only you and your spouse have a key=5

Gun safe score

Describe your gun safe installation:

ix Safe room

Do you have an official safe room? That is, a room where everybody goes to in the case of an emergency. This would be a room where the door is reinforced or is a stronger type door and a set of burglar guards are hinged to open and can unlock to provide an escape route. Is the key to the room on the door? Does everybody know where the escape route Key is kept?

No formal safe room = 0

Formal safe room but no strong door=3

Formal safe room with stronger door, =5

Safe room score

Describe a safe room:

x Emergency exit

The emergency exit is usually in the safe room. It would normally be a window where the burglar bars have been modified so that they open on a hinge and are locked closed. The key should be concealed in the room and the house occupants should be aware of its location.

Emergencies score.

Describe your emergency exit:

xi Communications,

Do you have a working Telekom line, cellphone or two-way radio in your safe room? Yes=5 no=0

Communications score

Describe your communications:

xii Door locks

Do you have suitable quality door locks on external doors? This would include the locks on your Gates? It is common to find two lever locks for the doors and the cheap "solid" type locks that open when you hit them with a hammer or a brick, which are not suitable locks. The 4 Lever locks on external doors=5, two Lever locks on external doors=2, if domestic servants have access to keys for the gates or house doors=-2

Door locks scores

Describe a door locks and key security:

xiii Persons at risk(children and aged persons)

What plans have been put in place to help persons in your family that are at risk for example small children, frail or bedridden elderly people? There are no points assigned to this topic but you need to address it.

Describe arrangers for persons at risk:

5. External Lighting.

Is there sufficient external lighting in the appropriate places, for example at the gate. Does the lighting shine away from the house or towards it (lights shining towards the house blind the people in the house)? You evaluate your lighting and give a score out of five.

External lighting score

Describe your lighting:

6. Out Buildings

Evaluate the buildings in terms of the points described above. The level of security afforded out buildings will be determined by the value of the contents of the buildings. Review outbuildings security rating out of five.

Outbuilding score

Describe your out buildings security:

7. Armed response

With the costs of an armed response officer, fuel, vehicle maintenance and the cost of the vehicle, the armed response companies generally try to cover as large an area as possible with a vehicle and in doing so they save on costs but increase the response time. This is to your detriment. Survey your community and see which the most popular armed response Company is. Enquire from their clients as to what is the response time. Check and see if you see the vehicle in your area, hopefully parked just down the road

somewhere. This would mean that it would have a short response time to an incident.

If you do not have armed response=0

If you do have armed response=5

Armed response score

9. Garden, trees and shrubs

The garden with lots of trees, shrubs and bushes leave an intruder plenty of pace to hide. In the ideal situation, the trees, shrubs and bushes would have no branches lower than waist level, this would leave little place for intruders to hide. The problem here is usually trying to get the ladies to agree to cutting back the shrubs, bushes and trees. Try an keep your Shrubs, bushes and trees a s far from the house and driveway as possible.

Garden score

10. Total score out of 100

