



HOME PROTECTION

DON'T LET DIGITAL CRIMINALS TARGET YOUR HOME.

How to use social networking safely.

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DID YOU KNOW?

Burglars use social networking sites to build profiles of potential targets. Not only that, but they can now tell when their targets are not at home.


Legal &
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DIGITAL CRIMINALS LOVE ONLINE INFORMATION.

It's very likely that you or someone in your household uses a social networking site, like Facebook, Bebo or Twitter.

They're great for keeping in touch with friends and family, sharing photos and updating people on what we're doing and where we're going.

Unfortunately, they're also a mine of information for digital criminals who can make use of the information you post on social networking sites to decide whether you are a suitable target.

They look at the information you post, your interests and hobbies to decide if your house is worth burgling. If you reveal

your location, they can even take a look at your property using Google Street View or find your full address using 192.com.

With the development of location-based apps for mobile phones, such as Facebook Places and FourSquare, they may also be able to tell where you are and whether you're at home or not.

"The key is to think twice before giving information away. If it feels uncomfortable, then it is probably the wrong thing to do."

Digital Criminal report 2010.
Legal & General

DO YOU DO THESE THINGS ON YOUR SOCIAL NETWORKING SITE?

- Publish your date of birth and your gender
- Reveal where you live or your level of education
- Post your phone numbers or email address
- Accept 'friends' you don't really know
- Talk about your holiday plans or new purchases

Then you're giving digital criminals exactly what they want.

SIMPLE STEPS YOU CAN TAKE TO HELP STOP DIGITAL CRIMINALS TARGETING YOUR HOME

Sharing isn't always good	Decide who you want to share your personal information with and what you want to make public. The more you share, the easier it is for digital criminals to target your home.
Choose your friends carefully	Not everyone online is who they say they are. Only accept people you know and trust.
Never share your password	Your password should be more than eight characters long and be a mixture of letters and numbers. It should not be something obvious like your name and you should never share it with anyone.
Be careful about what you post	Using social networking is like shouting in a crowded room, so be careful what you say. Consider all information you post to be permanent, even if you delete your account.
Keep protection software up to date	Make sure you use a firewall, plus antivirus, antispam and antispyware software and keep them updated.
Check what your household are doing	There's no point you being vigilant if your family or tenants aren't. Make sure your children understand the risks and check their social networking settings.
Use location-based software carefully	Sharing your whereabouts with others may let digital criminals know where you are, potentially leaving your home vulnerable to burglary. Find out more overleaf.
Make sure you have adequate insurance	If the worst happens and you are a victim of burglary, make sure your home contents insurance will cover any losses.

DON'T ADVERTISE YOUR EMPTY HOME.

ABOUT LOCATION-BASED APPS.

Location-based networking apps allow mobile device users to post updates detailing their current whereabouts. Users can also tag friends they're with and find friends who are using the service and may be close by.

Burglars usually prefer to target properties which are empty, so if we start advertising that we're away from home, it could be a boost to the burglars' earning potential.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP SAFEGUARD YOUR HOME?

- Never log-in to a location-based app at home. Don't let a digital criminal know where you live.
- This is new technology so familiarise yourself with it before going public.
- Avoid the temptation of logging on whilst on holiday – you'll advertise the fact that you're away.
- Make sure you are ex-directory and your address is not easily available online.

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