

Home Invasion Prevention Guide

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Home invasions are a serious concern in South Africa and often differ from other forms of crime due to their violent and confrontational nature. This guide is designed to help individuals, families, and households understand the risks and take **practical, preventative steps** to reduce vulnerability. Prevention is not about fear — it is about **awareness, preparedness, and layered security**. While no measure can guarantee complete safety, the steps outlined in this guide can significantly reduce risk and improve personal safety.

Understanding Home Invasions in South Africa

A home invasion typically involves criminals gaining entry to an occupied residence with the intent to steal, intimidate, or cause harm. These incidents often:

- Occur during early morning or evening hours
- Involve multiple perpetrators
- Rely on surprise, speed, and intimidation
- Target homes perceived as easy or predictable

Common risk factors include poor perimeter security, predictable routines, lack of lighting, and limited community awareness.

Layered Security Approach

Effective home security relies on **multiple layers of protection**, rather than a single solution.

1. Perimeter Security

The perimeter is your first line of defence.

- Secure boundary walls and fencing (no gaps, climb-resistant where possible)
- Lockable pedestrian and vehicle gates
- Anti-lift brackets on gates
- Warning signage (armed response, CCTV, neighbourhood watch)
- Keep shrubs trimmed and trees away from walls

2. Lighting

Good lighting deters criminals and improves visibility.

- Install motion-sensor lights near entrances and dark areas
- Ensure boundary and driveway lighting is functional
- Avoid creating shadowed hiding spots

3. Physical Barriers

Physical barriers delay access and create noise.

- Security gates on external doors
- Burglar bars on windows (with emergency release mechanisms)
- Solid-core doors and reinforced frames
- Lock bedroom doors at night

Access Control and Daily Habits

Entry Awareness

- Always lock doors and windows, even when at home
- Verify visitors before opening doors
- Do not allow unknown individuals access to your property
- Be cautious of criminals posing as delivery drivers or utility workers

Vehicles and Garages

- Lock vehicles at all times
- Close garage doors immediately after entry or exit
- Do not leave remote controls visible in vehicles

Routines

- Avoid predictable daily schedules
- Vary departure and arrival times where possible
- Use timers for lights when away

Technology and Alarm Systems

While technology is not foolproof, it plays an important role.

- Install a monitored alarm system with panic buttons
- Ensure alarms are armed correctly, especially at night
- Regularly test systems and replace batteries
- Consider CCTV cameras as both a deterrent and investigative aid

Choose **PSIRA-registered security providers** and ensure response procedures are clearly understood by all household members.

Inside the Home: Personal Safety

Safe Rooms

- Identify a secure room with a solid door and lock
- Keep a charged phone inside
- Teach family members where to go during an emergency

During a Home Invasion

- Prioritise life over property
- Remain calm and comply where necessary
- Avoid sudden movements or confrontation
- Use panic buttons or silent alerts if safe to do so

Self-defence should only be considered as a last resort and within the boundaries of South African law.

Community and Awareness

Community involvement is one of the most effective crime deterrents.

- Join or support local neighbourhood watches
- Participate in Community Policing Forums (CPFs)
- Share information about suspicious activity
- Build relationships with neighbours

Strong communities reduce isolation and improve collective response.

When You Are Away From Home

- Inform a trusted neighbour or family member
- Stop mail and deliveries
- Avoid posting travel plans on social media
- Use automated lights or smart systems

After an Incident

If a home invasion or attempted invasion occurs:

- Ensure everyone is safe
- Contact SAPS and your security provider immediately
- Avoid disturbing the scene if possible
- Seek medical or trauma support if needed

Psychological aftercare is important — trauma can affect adults and children differently.

Home invasion prevention is not a once-off task. It requires **ongoing awareness, maintenance, and cooperation** between households, security providers, and communities.

Preparedness saves lives. Awareness reduces risk. Community strengthens safety.

*Use the **Checklist provided below** to help document the necessary steps you can take. **Bilnor Staffing Solutions** Committed to safety, preparedness, and practical training within the South African environment.*

Home Invasion Prevention Checklist

Perimeter & External Areas

- Boundary walls/fencing intact and well-maintained
- Gates lock properly and cannot be easily lifted off hinges
- Trees and shrubs trimmed away from walls and windows
- Warning signage visible (armed response, CCTV, neighbourhood watch)
- External areas free of hiding spots

Lighting

- Motion-sensor lights installed and functional
- Driveway and entrance lighting operational
- No dark zones around the property at night

Doors & Windows

- Security gates fitted to all external doors
- Burglar bars fitted to accessible windows
- Doors are solid-core with reinforced frames
- Bedroom doors lock properly

Alarm & Technology Checklist

- Alarm system installed and regularly tested
- Alarm armed when home and away
- Panic buttons accessible and known to all occupants
- CCTV cameras positioned to cover entrances and perimeters
- Security provider is PSIRA-registered
- Emergency contact numbers displayed and saved on phones

Daily Habits & Awareness Checklist

- Doors and windows locked at all times
- Visitors verified before entry
- Garage doors closed immediately after use
- Vehicles locked and remotes concealed
- Household routines varied where possible
- Travel plans not shared publicly on social media

Emergency Preparedness Checklist

- Safe room identified
- Charged phone kept in or near the safe room
- Family members aware of emergency procedures
- Panic button or alert system tested
- SAPS and security response numbers readily available