

# Keep your property safe during burglars' busiest weeks



The dark days of December see the number of burglaries across Britain increase by up to 25% each year, sparking a need for homeowners and tenants to make their properties safe this Christmas.

“As the nights draw in, burglars are likely to try and take advantage of the darkness”, says Steve Coyle, Operations Director at Edinburgh property lettings and management specialist Cullen Property.

“To prevent the upset and damage caused by break-ins, both owners and tenants can take a few simple measures to make their home safer, especially if they are planning to go away for a few days.”

Cullen Property's tips include:

## 1. Locking up properly

It may sound obvious, but leaving without fully locking doors makes burglars' work easier. To be safe, use both Yale and mortice locks whenever possible.

## 2. Safeguarding your valuables

If you're planning to be away from home for any length of time, consider taking valuables such as jewellery, laptops and cameras with you. If that's not practical, storing them in a safe deposit box may be an option. There are plenty of facilities locally that offer both large and small storage space.

### 3. Securing your windows

Closing all of the property's windows and engaging any latches makes it harder for burglars to enter your home. Where possible, also lock your windows for added safety.

### 4. Switching the lights on

Putting one or two lamps on a timer switch helps make the flat appear inhabited whilst you're away. Choose times when you would normally be home, such as afternoons and evenings to programme the timers.

### 5. Bringing your property in from the cold

Consider storing bicycles which you normally keep in a communal stair inside your flat, especially if they won't be used during colder weather. If that's not an option, check your home insurance policy to ensure they are covered for theft.

### 6. Telling someone you trust

Ask your landlord, a neighbour or a friend to keep an eye on the property whilst you're away. If you know them well enough, it's worth leaving a key (without your address listed on it) with them for emergencies.

### 7. Not telling everyone

Who can see your social media profile? An announcement that you are off on holiday may be just what the burglars have been waiting for, so unless you are sure that your page cannot be seen by the general public, keep your absence quiet.