

Holiday checklist for your home

Planning to get out of town for the Easter holidays? If you're taking a break, even a short one, there are some important things you need to do before you leave.



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Recent research from e.on revealed that almost one in 10 UK holidaymakers had left a loved one at home in their rush to catch a flight. A further 17% had left behind important travel documents and almost one in five had forgotten about their luggage.

"The stress leading up to a holiday can cause you to be absent-minded in the hustle and bustle," warns John October, spokesperson for Dial Direct.

This forgetfulness could result in your home being burgled. According to the latest crime reports in South Africa, criminals still target residential suburbs for carjackings and house robberies. Moreover, burglaries at residential premises' increase during the holiday season. The e.on research also revealed that more than 13% of people forgot to properly secure their homes before they went on holiday, leaving them vulnerable to thieves.

"Many people go away for holidays like Easter without thinking about how they should safeguard their homes against robbery while they are gone," says October. Criminals know when houses are usually empty and may target homes that they have been watching and waiting to see when the residents leave. Avoid making your home an easy target," advises October.

Here, tips from Dial Direct Insurance on what to do before you leave:

- Empty your freezer. There's nothing worse than coming back from holiday to find your fridge smelling and full of rotten food.
- Mow your lawn. Overgrown grass on your pavement is a sure sign to any would-be robbers that you're not there.
- Get someone to collect your post. Once again, an overflowing post box is a sure sign that nobody's home and an open invitation for criminal activity on your premises.
- Turn off your geyser and any other plugs that do not need to be on while you're not there. This will save you money and is more eco-friendly.
- Make sure that someone close by has your contact details in case they need to get hold of you in an emergency.
- Alert your security company that you will be away so that they know to check your house is secure more often than usual.
- Lock all doors and potential entry points and turn your alarm system on.
- Do not leave jewelry, gadgets and other valuables lying around. This includes laptops, phones, passports and spare keys.
- Check you have your purse as well as all the documents, vouchers and reservation numbers you might need for your holiday.
- Make sure that your home contents insurance is up to date.

Remember that if you are to have break-in while on holiday and you do not secure your home properly, your insurance could be deemed invalid, so taking the time to do these things really is important.

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