

What a Burglar can tell about you and your house

Hey, thanks for broadcasting your trip on Facebook, and leaving your online privacy settings nice and open. Keep those beachy Instagrams coming. Now I know exactly where you are and how long you'll be away.

My favourite pastime is peeking into windows to see if you have anything worth my while. Don't bother hiding valuables like jewellery, or putting them in a safe deposit box. Just leave them on your dresser or in your sock drawer. Much easier for me to find.

Want to really show me you care? Leave the lights out, driveway empty, let the mail and newspapers pile up and sidewalk unshovelled. I hate those pesky electrical timers and motion detectors that turn the lights on and off.

Do you know the most common places for homeowners to hide spare keys? Because I do: under the mat, in the mailbox, on top of the doorsill or under the potted plant on the porch. Be a gem and leave it in one of those spots, and not with a friend or trusted neighbour.

No need to let your alarm company know you're going to be out of town, or ask any of your friends or neighbours to keep an eye on the place. Just leave town and forget about providing anyone with an emergency contact number.

Or better yet, leave a window unlatched. A garage or shed door would be great, too. Plenty to steal in there. Attached garages and sliding doors are my favourites – everyone forgets to double-check that they're locked.

Do me one final favour? Leave boxes for your latest purchases in the recycling bin so I know you have stuff worth stealing. My picks: TVs and small electronics. Thanks, bestie!