

Top 10 tips to secure your home in Summer.

Summer is all about making the most of the good weather, enjoying the garden and escaping on holiday. Unfortunately it's also a peak time for burglaries.

Opportunistic thieves take advantage of open windows. They can spot the tell-tale signs of an unoccupied house. So follow these 10 top tips to keep your home secure this summer.

- 1 Avoid leaving downstairs windows open after you go to bed, as many burglaries take place during the evening.
- 2 These days, it's easy for social media-savvy thieves to do their research online. It doesn't take long to work out if a homeowner is away by checking up on social media sites. Make your social media settings private so that only friends or people you trust can view posts. Broadcasting your holiday photos and updates on public sites can be risky. It's sensible to wait until you return home before sharing pictures of your holiday online.
- 3 Keep laptops, handbags or wallets away from open windows, cat flaps or letterboxes. It only takes seconds for a burglar to reach in and grab something.
- 4 If you're off on holiday, leave a set of keys with someone you trust so they can keep an eye on your home while you're away. Avoid leaving any spares in clichéd hiding places around your house and garden. Thieves know where to look.
- 5 Ask a friend or neighbour to remove post from your letterbox or front porch on a regular basis. A growing pile of letters and packages is a clear indicator that a house is empty. Or, you can use An Post's [MailMinder](#) service, which lets you pause mail delivery to your home for up to 12 weeks.
- 6 It may sound obvious, but if you're enjoying the garden, lock the front door and secure any windows. Opportunists only need a minute to do their dirty work.
- 7 Always pack away tools after a day tending to your garden or doing some DIY and make sure they're locked away and out of reach. Easy-to-grab tools are exactly the sort of things burglars look for to gain entry to a property.
- 8 Keep a few lights on in the evenings using timer switches. But avoid pulling all your curtains or blinds before heading off for a weekend or on holiday. This can show that no-one is home - especially in summer when the days are longer.
- 9 Install a home alarm, so that if the worst happens and there is a break in, you will receive an alert. This allows you, or even your neighbours, to quickly contact the Gardaí.
- 10 Finally, make sure you have contents insurance in place. This will protect you in the event of a summer burglary.

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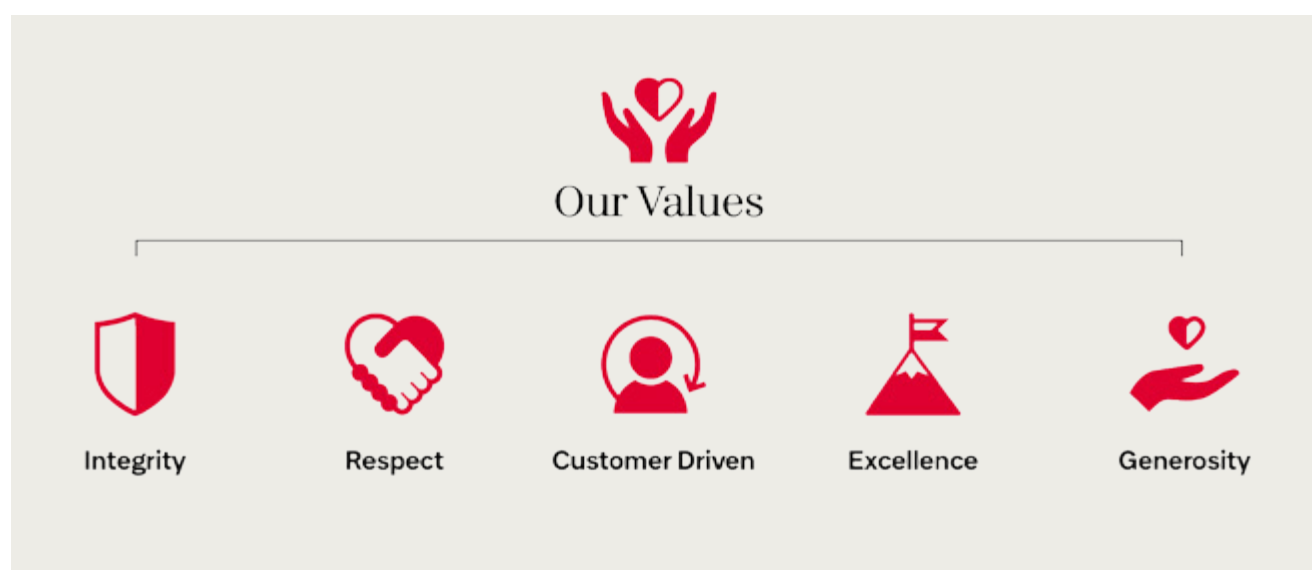
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