

★ Help! My home was broken into - what do I do? ★

WHAT TO DO AFTER A BURGLARY

Burglaries are stressful experiences. They can be very distressing leaving victims feeling vulnerable and lost. The action you take immediately following a break-in is critical to getting everything in order as quickly as possible. "What to do After a Burglary" lists steps to get back on your feet and moving forward with your life.



Call the police and file a report - first thing. A report gives you an incident on record, which is necessary for insurance claims. If you are not in the house when you discover the crime, make the call outside; do not touch anything inside.



Make an inventory of all items that have been taken. Give a thorough description and their approximate value; and any serial numbers you have for those items. If you've made videos, use those as reference and give a copy to the police.



Call your homeowner's or renter's insurance provider. By filing a claim, you can recoup a certain amount for what was stolen. Make sure to call within 24 hours; your carrier will guide you with processing your claim.



Call financial institutions and any device service provider if you believe any credit cards, checks, other financial information or any devices have been stolen. You may also need to call other agencies if your social security card or passport is missing.



View any security camera footage - be prepared for unexpected emotions seeing the actual break in. Make sure the police and insurance company have copies of this footage as further documentation.



Clean up your home of all signs of the burglary - this step begins getting your life physically back in order. Do this after all the necessary information has been documented.



Board up broken windows or doors until they can be repaired. You may also want to change or upgrade all your door and window locks after the crime as well.



Take some time to come to terms with the burglary. This crime is a violation of your sanctuary and can cause emotional and mental trauma to you and your family. Do the things you need to do to repair damages and move beyond the incident.



Reassess your home security. Use the footage to determine areas where you can increase security. Home security systems (from alarm and camera monitoring to motion sensor lights and guard patrol) are a great step to securing your family and home.