

LONGWOOD UNIVERSITY POLICE DEPARTMENT

Apartment Security

Help lock out apartment thieves

How secure is your apartment complex?

No non-violent crime is so devastating as coming home to find your apartment trashed, your precious belongings stolen and your personal space violated.

Don't be a victim! Following these tips will help you, the apartment dweller, to do your part in keeping your apartment building safe and secure from theft and other crimes.

Overall security

Apartment buildings are vulnerable to break-ins, theft and vandalism because criminals have many ways of getting in. Here are some ways you can help prevent unauthorized people from entering and keep your building secure.

Important!

- If you suspect a crime is in progress, do not investigate or ask questions! You could be putting yourself in danger, as well as warning the criminal. Call 9-1-1 immediately. Never become physically involved with an intruder.
- If you see any suspicious-looking people in or around the building, call police immediately, then notify the resident manager.

Don't let them in

- Never use your intercom to let a stranger into the building, including people who say "parcel delivery," "I forgot my key," or "paper boy." Unless you know them personally, do not let them in. Instruct all service people, delivery people and solicitors to contact the resident manager. Make sure any children and visitors know these rules, too. Remember, you are responsible for any person you let in. If you are having something delivered, arrange to be home at the time of delivery.
- Never hold the outer door open for strangers when you come in or go out. Tell them to buzz the person they're visiting or the resident manager. If you're uncomfortable, "hang back" to avoid a confrontation.

Keep those doors locked

- **Make a habit of locking the door when you come into your apartment. A thief can steal your valuables in the time it takes to have a shower. Remember, even if you live above the first level, you could become a victim.**
- **Always lock your apartment door, windows and patio doors when you leave, even if you're just going to the laundry room or the mailbox. The same holds for bedtime. Use a drop bar to secure sliding glass doors.**
- **Make sure all doors with locks have shut behind you after you come in or leave.**
- **Never prop open the entrance doors and leave them unattended. If you're moving, have someone posted at the doors.**
- **Report any burned-out lights, non-functional locks or doors, or broken windows to the resident manager and request they be replaced as soon as possible.**
- **Report lost keys to the resident manager immediately.**
- **Never put your identification or address on your apartment or car key rings.**
- **Never hide spare keys.**
- **If your apartment door doesn't have a deadbolt lock or peephole, it's a good idea to ask the resident manager for permission to have them installed.**
- **Use your first initial and last name only, and do not use the title "Ms." or "Miss," etc. on the intercom panel.**
- **Have your keys ready as you approach the door.**
- **Get to know your neighbors. Then you'll know if someone doesn't belong. Arrange to keep an eye on each other's apartments while you're away.**

Don't tip them off!

- **Never leave notes on your apartment door or on the intercom panel indicating your whereabouts or return time - this tells a potential thief how much time they have.**
- **When you go out, leave a radio and a light on, or hook them up to a timer.**
- **Draw curtains or close blinds after dark. When the curtains are open at night, you can't see out, but others can see in.**

Mailbox security

You can help prevent thieves from stealing mail, which may contain valuable credit cards or checks.

- **If you receive mail that is not yours, do not leave it in the lobby. Write "Not At This Address" on it and drop it into a street letterbox the next chance you get.**
- **If you suspect or discover someone has tampered with or stolen your mail, call the police and notify the Post Office. Thieves most often target credit cards and bank statements.**
- **If you see someone tampering with mail or mailboxes, call the police immediately.**

Security in common areas

Common areas in your apartment building may include laundry rooms, lobbies, party rooms, recreational facilities, parking garages and storage areas. Thieves are tempted by items in storage areas, cars and contents, and coins in the laundry machines. Here are some ways to help keep these areas safe from theft or personal injury for you and everyone in your building.

- **It's safer to leave the lights on in common areas at all times. Then you can see if anyone is in the room before you go in.**
- **If your laundry room door has a lock, always make sure the door closes behind you when you leave. Make sure the windows are also locked.**
- **Do not linger alone in any common area.**
- **All reputable laundry service technicians have photo identification. Beware of people posing as technicians in order to rob the machines of coins. Report anyone suspicious-looking to police immediately.**
- **Report any laundry equipment break-ins to police and the resident manager.**
- **Do not store valuable items in storage areas, especially if they can be seen from outside the room.**
- **Do not advertise your expensive car stereo to thieves. Turn it down well before you enter your garage.**
- **Make sure the garage door goes down behind you when you enter or leave the garage.**
- **Have your keys ready as you approach your car.**
- **Make sure valuables are locked out of sight in your parked vehicles.**