

# Home Security Goes High-Tech

SHATTERPROOF GLASS, DOORS THAT CAN'T BE KICKED IN—TODAY'S HOME SECURITY OPTIONS ARE STRONGER THAN A SIMPLE ALARM

BY ERIC BUTTERMAN

**T**HERE AREN'T MANY THINGS SCARIER THAN THE THOUGHT OF someone invading your home. It's not just the potential danger but also the feeling of violation, even if you were fortunate enough not to be home at the time of burglary. Luckily, the home security industry has continued to make strides in providing reliable protection based on situation and budget.

Robert Siciliano, a security expert whose clients have included ADT and Century 21, says there are plenty of options to choose from. In his experience, many people opt for multiple cameras inside the house. These cameras won't just send an alert to your phone when there's unusual activity, but will also send a 30-second video of what transpired. Siciliano also advises people to look for the bonus offering of sensor detection—it's especially helpful for non-criminal situations too, like letting you know when the kids get home from school or if the water heater overflows. If you want to go the next level, Siciliano says you can stop intruders on the inside by setting up a system that will release a nontoxic white smoke or pepper spray. It may sound dangerous, but "it's done in a very similar way to how restaurants have tanks which will dispense flame retardant materials in case of fire," Siciliano says.

**Other areas to consider when upping the protection on your home:**

**Windows.** Siciliano recommends ShatterGARD®. It's a nearly impenetrable window film that can withstand the impact of a baseball bat or a hammer. "If someone is having to beat a window for 10 minutes," says Siciliano, "then they draw attention to themselves and will likely give up."

**Doors.** Front and back doors are very easy to kick in—roughly 70 percent of burglars enter by forcibly breaking down a door! The Door Devil™ is one way to help combat that problem. A metal plate that's installed in the doorjamb, it works in conjunction with the deadbolt to reinforce the frame. Another option is OnGARD, which mounts onto the floor and takes less than 10 minutes to install. Once installed, the door can't be opened from either inside or outside without removing it.

When it comes to advanced technology, Siciliano highly recommends leaving that to the professionals. "Cameras are so advanced now that it's very difficult for the average person to do it right," he says.

Lastly, keep in mind Texas Farm Bureau Insurance offers a discount\* for certain alarm systems that incorporate monitoring. This savings may be the equivalent of having one or two months of your alarm system monitoring paid each year. ★

Reporter **Eric Butterman** feels safer knowing now that things such as shatterproof glass and kick-proof doors exist and are readily available for purchase.

\*Coverage and discounts are subject to qualifications and policy terms and may vary by situation.

## HOME SECURITY QUICK TIPS

- 1 If someone offers you a free home alarm system evaluation, watch out. You might think you're getting a deal, but they're getting the dish on your system (if you have one) and how to break in.
- 2 Always put the system on, even if you'll only be gone for a little while. Burglars can get in and out of your home in minutes, so make arming the system a habit, not a once-in-a-while occurrence.
- 3 Ask yourself if you're going overboard. Although security systems can be great for peace of mind, choose a system that still allows you to live your life. Remember: Protection is a positive, paranoia isn't.

