

# ***SAFETY AND SECURITY SOURCE***

## **For Sale By Owners SAFETY and SECURITY Tips:**

### **12 Steps to Help Keep Your Family Safe and Protect Your Valuables While Your Home is on the Market.**

**Provided courtesy of your professional neighborhood REALTOR®.**

1. **NEVER let strangers who walk up to your door into your house**- Make them schedule an appointment in advance. Also, advise your children not to let anyone in the house, no matter what they say. Even if they claim to be a real estate agent and present a business card (anyone can print those), they need to follow procedure.
2. **Always screen prospective buyers before they step foot into your home**- Ask for employment information and get a phone number to call them at work. Ask for a home phone number. Do internet research and confirm they live where they claim and call their landlord. "Google" them. You can also search public records. Talk to their lender and confirm that they are legitimate buyers.
3. **Never give your home phone number to buyers**- Would-be criminals will know when you are not home if they call and don't get an answer.
4. **Never give your work or home schedule to buyers**- Telling would-be buyers that no one is home at a certain time of the day (for example, "We don't get off until 5:00, so I can show you after then") lets them know the perfect time to come back and victimize you (when you aren't home).
5. **Never show your home alone**- There is safety in numbers. Have another adult with you. Avoid exposing your children to strangers in the house.
6. **Always accompany buyers throughout your house at all times**- This allows you to prevent theft and the unlocking of windows and doors for later re-entry when you aren't home.
7. **Hide all valuables**- Including jewelry, bank information, prescription medication, etc. Hide them where thieves don't think to look. If necessary, put valuables in storage. This means jewelry out of jewelry boxes, medicine out of medicine cabinets and guns/weapons in locked safes. Do not allow them to use your bathroom. Put all mail away, including credit card bills and bank statements. Put away personal photos of family members..
8. **Always have your escape route pre-planned**- In case of the need for an emergency exit. Know exactly which door you will use for your exit. Nothing or no one should be allowed to block your emergency exit.
9. **Never let buyers get between you and your escape route**- (The front or back door). You should never enter a room or space in front of the buyer. Buyers always go first!
10. **Always let someone; relative, friend or better yet, a neighbor, know who's coming to see your house and the time frame**. Share your check-in time and completion time. If they don't hear from you at a pre-determined time, they need to call 9-1-1 or get to your house immediately.
11. **Keep your cordless home phone in hand at all times** in case you need to call for help, this is better than a cell phone because with 9-1-1- your address will show up on the dispatch operator's screen even if you can't talk. Research location emergency apps that call for help when you are unable to make a phone call. Utilize emergency location based apps, too.
12. **Beware of over-sharing on social media**. This includes your children. Don't share or brag about vacations or plans to go out. Don't photograph and show, or brag about expensive art work, electronics, (or even have them in the background of personal pictures). Be especially careful when photographing the rooms for marketing purposes. Don't announce open houses, your house's price or amenities on social media.

**If you are uncomfortable taking these extra precautionary steps, call the real estate agent who shared this information. They have been trained to protect not only themselves, but to advise you on protecting your family and valuables, as well.**

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