

# **Special Report**

## **A SECURITY SYSTEM FOR YOUR HOME** (for less than \$100)

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## TIPS ON DESIGNING A SECURITY SYSTEM FOR YOUR HOME

**As a Security Consultant I've designed hundreds of security systems and seen the result of numerous break-ins. This report is designed to help you design a home security system to fit your needs and budget.**

*Note: Prices mentioned in this report are prices of products we sell through Potomac Ltd. JP*

**Question?** Is it better to install a security system in your home before you have a break-in or to install one after a break-in to prevent it from happening again?

- The most important task of a security system is to protect you and your loved ones **when you're home, especially when you're asleep!**
- Most homes can be protected with an effective security system for less than \$100.



### **Commercial system or purchase and install yourself.**

You've seen the TV ads. A major company will install a security system in your home for \$99. What's the catch? Well, it's usually a basic system (2 doors and a motion sensor). Extra equipment is added at regular cost. So start adding extra doors, a second motion sensor, window sensors and your cost can go up hundreds of dollars. And....**you don't own the system**, you lease it, usually by signing a monitoring agreement for \$35-\$45 per month for three to five years.

**The dirty secret about monitored systems:** Monitoring is the least effective part of your system. If someone breaks in when you're home, you can dial 911 faster than someone in a remote monitoring station. If someone breaks in when you're not home, don't expect the police to rush over. The cops know that over 97% of residential alarms are false alarms. Calls about a break-in from a monitoring station have a **very** low priority. And today, many police districts do not dispatch without a visual confirmation. Also, most monitoring stations do not call the police when they receive an alarm, they call you or whomever is on your call list, and you or whomever decides whether they should call the police.

### **Pros and cons of a commercial system vs. a self installed system:**

#### **Pros of a commercial system:**

- The decals from a well known company are often a deterrent to the bad guy. This does **not** apply to generic decals, such as: "Protected by Electronic Security System".
- Extra protection can be added (at extra equipment cost and extra monitoring cost) such as fire protection and medical protection when you're home.

#### **Cons of a commercial system:**

- Equipment can be expensive, especially when you add equipment above the *Basic System*.

- You don't own the system.
- Monitoring is the most expensive and the least effective part of your system.

#### **Pros of a self installed system:**

- Easy to install and you own the system.
- Inexpensive. Most homes can be protected for less than \$100. If you have an apartment or condo above ground level you can protect your entry door using an alarm with keypad for \$11.95. Add protection for a sliding glass door for \$3.75. Add a motion sensor with auto-dialer to call you or a neighbor during a break-in when you're gone for \$49.95. And no monitoring cost. Compare with a commercial monitoring system @ \$35 per month for five years and **you've saved over \$2000 !**

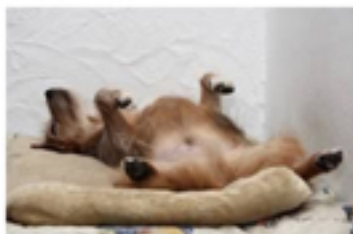
#### **Cons of a self installed system:**

- No decal from a well known company to act as a deterrent.
- At present, no fire or medical protection available.

#### ***Misconceptions:***

- **State-of-the-Art systems use laser beams.** We've all seen the caper movies and TV shows where someone has to cross an area with criss-crossed laser beams to reach a protected room or item. This is usually done with agility and/or mirrors. In actuality this is a media gimmick. Active laser beams haven't been used for security systems in over 20 years. Most area protection is now done with passive infrared sensors (PIR's). They work by monitoring the background temperature of a room and detect a person's body heat as they cross the room.

- **I don't need a security system. I have a dog.**



Well...does it sleep on your bed? Or in your bedroom? Is it an older dog? (Hearing declines with age.) Does it sleep at night? A junkyard I know of employs two dogs, a day shift dog that sleeps at night and a night shift dog that sleeps during the day. Some dogs are sounder sleepers than some people. (Also, some people install a security system to protect their dog when they're away.)

#### ***Design Tips:***

- **Doors**, assuming your windows are locked, are your biggest danger at night. Dead bolt locks are not difficult to pick (someone can enter silently at 2:00 AM). Bad guys rarely break glass at night, it's not even common during the day when the home is unoccupied. The sound of breaking glass carries and draws attention. Glass break sensors are available that detect the frequency pattern of breaking glass and/or the vibration. However, these are the least reliable type of sensors. More common are magnetic window sensors that sound an alarm if a





- window is forced open.
- Adding an extra magnet to your window or sliding glass door sensor allows you the option of arming it closed or open a few inches for ventilation.
- **Motion detectors** are effective at protecting rooms, stairways and halls. The main negative of motion detectors are that when they activate, someone is already in your home.

Be careful to avoid false alarms when setting up a motion detector in homes with pets. With most motion detectors you can mask off the lower portion of the lens creating a "pet alley" so movement below a designated area will not trigger an alarm. Even so, you must restrict the view area to perhaps the base of a stairway or if viewing a room, be sure it's not seeing furniture a pet can climb on. (Cats can be more problematic than dogs in this regard.)

In designing a system you'll want door sensors with entry and exit delays, then a motion sensor as a back up. The next upgrade would be window sensors for your accessible windows. Add a sensor with an auto dialer and save hundreds of dollars a years in monitoring fees.

**Note: When an alarm sounds, bad guys usually make a rapid exit.**

### ***Current trends in security systems:***

**Camera systems** with remote viewing: If you receive a notification from your system of an alarm, you can view the interior of your home in real time from your smart phone or remote computer. If you see an intruder and call 911 stating that you are viewing the intruder on camera as you speak, you'll get a rapid response from the police. also, since many police districts are fining home owners for false alarms you'll save the expense.



**Note:** If you want more than one camera you can invest in a four channel DVR with remote viewing through your router. This can be set to record 24/7, on a schedule or when motion is detected.

A single IP camera can also be programmed to detect motion and send a notification to your smart phone or an e-mail to your computer although its recording capacity is limited (some can record directly to your computer's hard drive).

**Bio: Jeff Powers is President of Potomac Ltd., a former Green Beret and a NRA Certified and Brinks Certified Firearms Instructor. He is also a former Security Consultant for Rollins Protective Services and ADT specializing in security system design and video surveillance.**