

SAFETY TIPS

For-Sell-By-Owner Safety Guide

These safety tips can make your home-selling experience less risky. Selling your home doesn't need to be scary, but don't throw precaution to the wind. It's always better to be safe than sorry!

- When you set an appointment for someone to see your home, insist they give you their name and telephone number. Call back to verify that the number is a working number. An easy way to do this is to say, "let me check with my husband for the best time, and I will call you back." You can say this even if you're not married. Record the name and number and keep the information.
- When you advertise, use a cell phone number as your contact number. Advertising a home telephone number lets would-be burglars know you are not home if they call the home telephone number and don't get an answer.
- Never let strangers who walk up to your door into the house. Tell your children not to let anyone in the house, no matter what they say. Children should be taught that when strangers come to the door they should shut the door, lock it, and call for an adult. Using a chain lock can provide extra security.
- Even if you are expecting someone who has made an appointment to see your home, never let a stranger into your house unless you ask for identification first. Make sure the name on the identification is the same name they gave you when they made the appointment. If the person states that they are a real estate agent, ask for a business card.
- Always check after potential buyers leave to be sure windows and doors that should be locked are still locked.
- Never let the potential buyers know your schedule. Don't tell them when you are not home, when your husband is not home, when you pick up the kids, when you work, when you will be on vacation, etc. If you can't be home when buyers want to look at the house, make up an excuse why you can't show it to them then. Say you are expecting company and that time isn't convenient.
- Keep your cordless home phone in hand at all times in case you need to call for help. A cordless home phone is better than a cell phone because if you call 911 on a

cordless phone, your address will pop up on the dispatch operator's screen even if you can't talk.

- Be careful what information you give a caller about the house. Never give information such as we don't have a security system, dead bolts, etc. If a caller acts unduly interested in your home's security, make up an excuse to hang up. Tell them someone is at the door or you have a call coming in that you have been waiting for.
- Always let someone (a relative, friend, or better yet, a neighbor), know that someone is coming to see your house and what time they are coming. Have a set check-in time so they can call or get to your house immediately if they don't hear from you by that pre-determined time.
- Keep a list of all people who have looked at your house, including the name, phone numbers, and addresses, descriptions of their cars, tag numbers and any additional information which could be helpful in the event of a future burglary. All these people would be suspects. This information can also be useful if you decide to lower your price and want to contact people who have looked at your house to let them know you have dropped the price.
- If you have a home flyer information box, do not put information on the flyer which would breach security.
- Place all valuable items out of sight. Guns, jewelry, silverware, and collections - anything of value needs to be locked up. If necessary, put valuables in storage or a safe deposit box.
- When strangers are in your house, stay with them and watch everything they do. Maintain a safe distance. You should always have an escape route pre-planned just in case of an emergency. Never let potential buyers get between you and your escape route (the front or back door). You should never enter a room or space before the buyer does because you don't want to be trapped inside. Potential buyers should always go first.
- If someone who comes to look at your house asks to use the bathroom, they may be looking for prescription drugs. There is a huge market for these drugs. Make sure you hide any prescription drugs in a place that isn't obvious to strangers.
- There is safety in numbers. It's always best to have another adult with you when you show your home.

- If, for any reason, you are not comfortable showing your own home, you may want to hire a real estate professional. Not only is it safer for you, but working with an agent makes it possible for people to see your house when you are at work or at other times when you can't be home. If you want to sell your home, you have to accommodate the buyer's schedule, not your own.