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**Mind your  
business...  
(if you don't,  
burglars will!)**

How would you like to help a burglar break into your place of business and steal everything of value you have?

Sounds crazy? Don't be too sure. Quite a few business owners do just that. . . though they don't realize they're doing it.

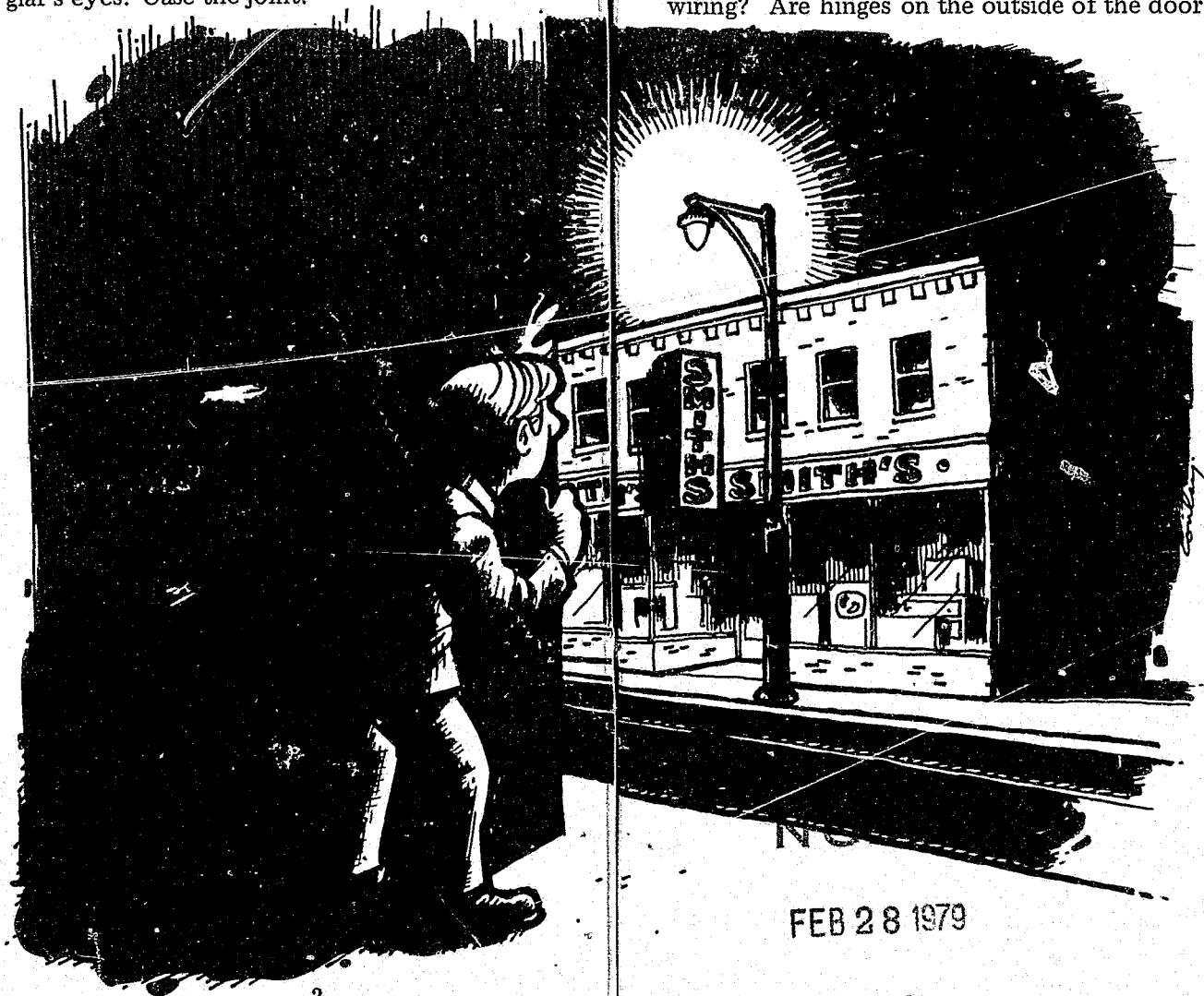
If you're not doing everything you can to make it hard for a burglar to get in. . . if you're not making it likely he'll get caught if he does get in. . . or if you're making your business too tempting a target, you might as well be the thief's accomplice.

Are you a potential accomplice? Here's one way to find out: Stop by your business at night, when it's closed. Look at it with a burglar's eyes. Case the joint.

Start across the street. Are there shadows to hide you as you try to get in? Would boxes stacked near the building provide cover? Is a delivery truck or company car parked near the side so you could use it as cover or as a ladder to get in a window or onto the roof?

Is there merchandise in the display window, where you could smash, grab and run? Can you see into the far corners of the display room, or could you work at your leisure, unseen by passersby?

Now take a walk around the building. Does a sidewalk grille lead to a basement loading entrance? Is there evidence of a burglar alarm—a door or window sticker or some visible wiring? Are hinges on the outside of the door,



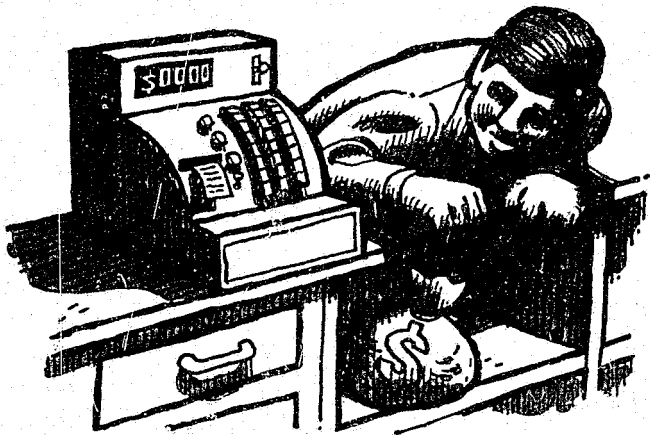
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so you could remove them and lift the door out? What kind of lock is on the door? Is there a glass panel you could break to reach inside and unlock it? Check the door—is it even locked? (It's much easier to walk in than to break in.)

How about basement or ground floor windows—could you gain access through them? Could you pull a van into the back alley to cart away your loot? How about a skylight or large vents as a way to get in—or adjoining buildings?

You could find out all these things without even going into your business. . . probably without making anyone suspicious. If you came back during business hours, you could do further checking on locks and the burglar alarm, see where the money is kept, find out when there's a lot of cash on hand and where valuable merchandise is displayed.



These are all things a would-be burglar looks for. And they are things that you, as a business owner, must be aware of too. . . unless you want to be his accomplice.

Security is an important part of business management. . . just as important as inventory control and pricing, because it directly affects your balance sheet. A good security system may seem costly, but it's cheaper in the long run than risking being wiped out by a skilled burglar. . . and that can happen to a small business.

How much time and money you spend on security will depend on a lot of variables: whether you're in an area with a high crime rate, whether your merchandise is especially

appealing for its resale value, the layout and size of your shop, and others. But regardless of how "safe" you think you are, you must spend some time and money on it; you can't afford to ignore it.

Chances are your local police department has at least one crime prevention officer (in small towns, the chief may be the one). He's trained to spot security gaps, point them out to you, suggest improvements. It's time well spent—both from his standpoint and from yours—to make a complete security inspection of your business. Then it's up to you to follow through.

## How to put burglars out of business

You can do a number of things to "put burglars out of business"—specifically, your business. They fall into four general categories: (1) making your business uninviting to a burglar; (2) making it hard for him to get inside; (3) making it hard for him to find or remove valuable items; and (4) making it likely he'll get caught if he does get in.

### 1. Making Your Business Uninviting

Good lighting—both inside and outside—is probably the single most effective and inexpensive deterrent to burglary. Lighting destroys the cover of darkness burglars prefer to work in. Outside lights—the sodium vapor type is best—should cover all points of entry, alleys and passageways, especially those in the back. Inside lights are particularly important around the safe and cash register.

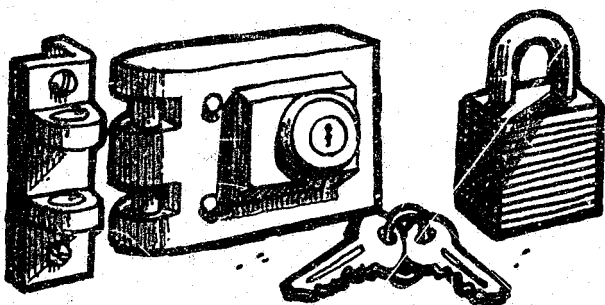
Valuable merchandise should be illuminated too—but try to keep it out of display windows at night. Arrange your stock so that a burglar working in a far corner of the shop could be seen by someone walking by. If you have a burglar alarm, make it obvious—put a decal on the door or window, or make it visible from outside. Don't provide other kinds of cover for a burglar—stacked boxes, a vehicle parked close to the building, ladders, and so on.

### 2. Making It Hard to Get Inside

Exterior doors should be heavy and solid. . .not hollow. Wooden doors should be

metal-lined to resist sawing and Drilling. Glass panels should be protected against being kicked or knocked out. Side and back entrances should also have metal bars as wide as the inside of the door that can be dropped into place at closing time. Hinge pins on doors should be installed inside so that they cannot be removed by a thief.

A deadbolt lock is best for doors. There are two main types. One (single cylinder) requires a key to open from the outside but can be opened with a knob from the inside. It is effective if the door is strong and there's no nearby glass that could be broken to get to the



knob. The other type (double cylinder) requires a key to open from both outside and inside. This is effective if the door is not so strong or there's breakable glass near it. But it also can be a fire hazard if it's kept locked during business hours. Make sure your local codes permit this type of lock before installing one.

Avoid springlatch locks that can be opened by using a knife blade, a thin piece of metal or a plastic strip.

Window security is just as important as door security. Break-resistant glass is best, especially for display windows. Rear and side windows should be protected by grillwork (iron bars) or by heavy-duty screen (No. 9 gauge interior wire guards), also useful on doors with glass panels. The grillwork or screen should be bolted through the building. Locks are useful on some types of windows; check with a good locksmith.

Don't overlook other ways a burglar might get inside your business—skylights, ventilators, sidewalk grilles, loading docks, old coal chute openings and others. Take steps to make these burglar-resistant also.

And don't forget that some thieves don't even have to break in: They walk in while you're open, then hide in a rest room, closet or similar hiding place until after closing time. So check all potential hiding places before closing up.

If you store some of your stock outside, it should be well lighted and enclosed by a fence—high, sturdy and topped with barbed wire (otherwise it's too easy to climb over or poke a hole through).

### 3. Making It Hard to Find or Remove Valuable Items

Safes and cash registers should be clearly visible from the street. Leave the cash register drawer open and empty after business hours. The safe should be of good quality and firmly anchored. Lock your check protector and blank checks in the safe. Avoid having large amounts of cash on the premises. Make bank deposits at varying times during the day.

If good lighting doesn't scare off a burglar, it will make it harder for him to go undetected while he's working inside or outside the building. If possible, hide or lock in the safe high-value items (such as expensive rings or watches) that would be especially attractive to a thief.



### 4. Making It Likely the Thief Will Get Caught

Consider installing a burglar alarm system. They range from the simple, inexpensive kind that merely makes a noise in the building to the complex, expensive and silent type that's tied to a police station or security agency. What kind you need depends on several factors: how likely it is that a thief would be detected without one, how far you are from a police station,

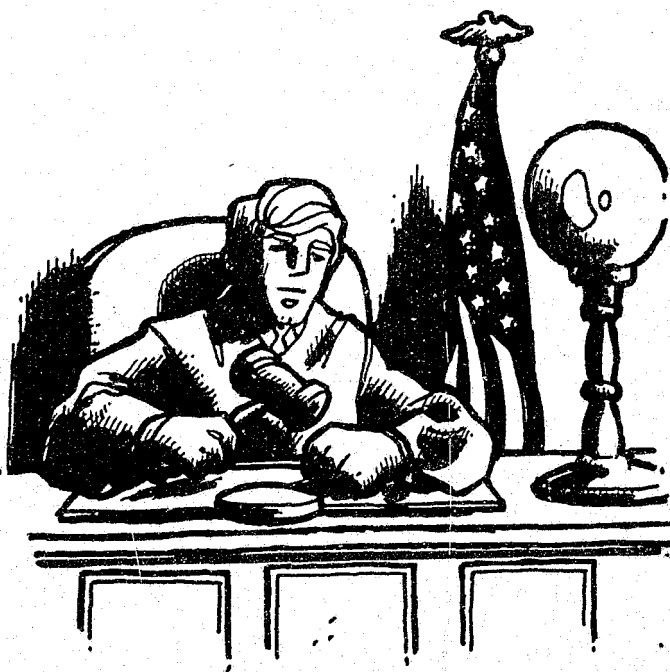
how the system's cost compares with the cost of goods to be protected.

Get a system that either monitors itself or can be easily checked to make sure it's in good operating condition. Shop carefully and buy from a reputable company. If you have a good alarm system, you'll probably get a discount on your business insurance premium.

In lieu of (or in addition to) an alarm system, you may want to hire a security guard or security service to patrol your business at night. If not, make sure someone (either you or one of your employees) is responsible for checking security of the business before closing time.

Record serial numbers of large-denomination bills. Also, a small amount of marked "bait money" may help police trace a thief. Try to keep a good inventory of your stock, including serial numbers of valuable goods, theft-prone items and business equipment. This will help police trace stolen goods and help you in filing an insurance claim.

If you do become a burglary victim, cooperate with the police in every way you can—including pressing charges if they catch a suspect and have enough evidence to convict him.



## Other things you can do

You can take several other steps to help put burglars out of business—not just yours, but other business places too:

1. Start a mutual aid system among stores and offices on your block. Each member agrees to keep an eye on his neighbor's building and to call the police if he sees anything suspicious. Some adjacent firms may install two-way silent alarm systems so that one may signal the other to call police in case of a holdup or other emergency.

2. If you're having a new building built or an old one modernized, discuss security requirements with your architect or contractor. For instance, you might want to use glass block instead of ordinary glass in windows that aren't needed for ventilation. The cost difference between building a secure structure and a vulnerable one is minimal.

3. Try to get your city to pass a burglary prevention ordinance that sets minimum security standards for businesses and provides for police to educate business owners on how to prevent break-ins. Such ordinances have been credited with increasing crime prevention awareness among business owners and reducing the burglary rate in some cities.

4. Help form an organization to pinpoint your city's burglary problems and to look for solutions. Police, business owners, insurance companies and security protection firms should be represented.

5. Urge that police be represented on your local building permit board so they can offer advice on security matters.

## Insurance

Another form of protection against burglary is business insurance. It can't keep burglars out, but it can help you recover financially if they make off with some of your merchandise. There are a number of different types of business insurance and there's bound to be a policy tailored to your needs. How good your security is has a bearing on the premium you pay. Discuss your insurance needs with an agent you trust. If you already have insurance, you may want to update the coverage.



## Security check list

- L**ocks for doors should be the dead-bolt type. Doors should be heavy and solid. Protect glass in doors and windows with grillwork or heavy-duty screen.
- O**penings other than doors and windows—skylights, ventilators, sidewalk grilles, and so on—also should be protected. Fences should be high, sturdy and topped with barbed wire.
- C**over is something you don't want burglars to have. Adequate lighting—both inside and outside—is a must. Don't stack boxes or leave a vehicle parked next to the building.
- K**eept valuable items out of display windows at night. Hide them or lock them up in a safe.
- I**nsurance on your business is something you musn't be without. How good your security is has a bearing on your premium.
- T**rip up a thief by installing an effective alarm system, leaving cash register drawer open and empty, anchoring safe firmly, recording serial numbers of large bills.
- U**nderstand the importance of checking out potential employees before hiring, making one person responsible for checking security before closing time.
- P**rotect your business and others by working to improve the effectiveness of crime prevention in your community.



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