

Six secret tips to secure your conservatories and orangeries during 2011 Christmas against burglary

- Crystal Windows & Conservatories –

Summary: Christmas traditionally sees a spike in incidents of domestic burglary. With more than 20 years of experience in designing and building conservatories and orangeries, Crystal Windows & Conservatories would like to share their six secret tips to avoid 2011 Christmas burglaries.

It's that time of year again, when incredible news stories serve to remind us of the importance of home security around Christmas time. For instance a news story broke out earlier in Ohio, US – it concerned an 11 year-old boy returned home only to discover a stranger sitting on the couch, having put the Christmas decorations. Although the offender is charged with burglary, and no one was hurt, the story could've ended up very different. It reminds us that Christmas traditionally sees a spike in incidents of domestic burglary. It's well known the weakest parts in your home are windows, doors, conservatories and orangeries. With years of experience in designing and building conservatories and orangeries, Crystal Windows would like to share their secret tips to avoid Christmas burglaries.

1. Remember to Lock up: It may sound obvious (and it is), but it's worth mentioning – lock your doors and windows every time you leave or return the house. In most burglary cases, the offenders broke into properties through the doors or windows by forcing the lock or knocking in. Conservatory and orangery are particularly at higher risk, so make sure you have installed strong and secure doors and windows, in some cases, it's worth having weak ones replaced. Glass panels are another vulnerable link. We recommend our customers to adopt laminated glass when it comes to having them replaced. If yours are not, the simplest solution will be to buy a specialised film which will reinforce the glass panels. If you are fitting new doors or windows, make sure your installers don't cut corners, and use ones certified to British Standard BS7950(for windows) or PAS 21-1(for doors). Some modern locking mechanisms will need you to lift the lever whilst using a key to securely lock it. Reminders pinned next to all entrances will work well. Don't forget to hide all keys out of sight. You'd be amazed how many burglars can fish keys left on show out of home.

2. Door security is key: A front door can provide for a warm welcome to our homes, but some doors are more susceptible to attack from unscrupulous thieves. Many doors look safe and secure as they are often made from PVCu or composite, but with a little know-how,

1



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accessing them can be easy peasy to thieves. They use a process called lock bumping (but don't expect us to give you an insight as to how this works, we don't want to give anyone ideas), but it's actually a legitimate process for a trained professional locksmith. The key to protecting your doors is to ensure they are fitted with anti-bump, anti drill and anti-snap door locks.

3. **Visibility:** A visible burglar alarm with flashing light is always a huge deterrence. So is the Neighbourhood watch sign. Security floodlights with motion sensor will enhance the visibility outside, making you an unlikely target. It is important to include these options when designing your conservatories and orangeries.

4. **Hide:** We know Christmas is the best time of the year to treat your family and yourself with some sought-after gifts. But remember how heart breaking it is to lose those gifts. So remember always keep all gifts out of the sight, and make sure packaging is disposed of right away. It's no use hiding your new laptop if you leave the box outside!

5. **Stay alert:** Bogus callers also known as distraction burglars will try their best to distract your attention in order to get into your home. If anyone unfamiliar or unexpected turns up at your door, you should always check identification before letting anyone in. Remember though, all charity collectors, utility readers should always have identification with them at all time, and don't feel being offensive not letting them in if they weren't able to produce legitimate identifications. Equally don't leave them standing at the door whilst you go searching in the house for something.

6. **Enjoy:** well, this isn't a tip for avoiding burglary, but we shouldn't let burglars spoil our festive season. These simple tips will help ensure you have a risk free Christmas. Crystal Windows & Conservatories would like to wish you all a safe and enjoyable Christmas!