



How Do Home Security Systems Work?

A home security system consists of an array of interconnected devices and services that are meant to secure homes from burglars and other home invaders. Using pre-installed detection technology, the system can identify an intrusion and alert the monitoring service and the occupants themselves. The monitoring service then contacts the proper authorities. Depending on a home's layout, the devices a home security system employs may include motion detectors, security cameras, and door and window sensors.

Traditionally, home security networks were operated via a control panel placed within the home. With the advent of smartphones, certain companies now offer phone-based management systems.

When someone enters the home through normal means, and the security system is active, the entrant is given a period of time to enter the disarm code. If the correct code is not input in time, or if entrance is detected through other access points — windows, enclosed back doors — then the alarm will sound. At that point, the alarm company will attempt to contact the homeowners, in case of a false alarm. If that's the case, they will need to present a pre-established code word as evidence for disarmament. If the monitoring company cannot reach the homeowners, or the wrong code word is uttered, then they will immediately notify the police. All told, from initial entrance to police notification, the process can take up to 90 seconds.

How Effective Are Home Security Systems?

Home security systems are great at four things — detection, prevention, management, and deterrence. In the United States, home burglaries occur on average once every 14 seconds. Of those, 79% of invaders will enter through either the front door, back door, or first floor window. They most often occur between 10am and 3pm, when the occupants are most likely to be out. With those statistics in mind, it's been found by [specialists at UNC Charlotte](#) that nearly two-thirds of potential burglars are deterred if a house displays evidence of a home security system.

In a greater sense, the success of home security systems offer direct economic benefits. Generally speaking, crime rates in the United States, including burglary, rape, and murder, are half of what they were 25 years ago. As a result, home values and community investment has increased, while insurance premiums and law enforcement taxes have decreased.

When Does Home Security Makes Sense?

Home security systems make the most sense when weighing costs. Just as health insurance compares the cost of critical illness care against the cost of monthly premiums, those investigating home security systems should compare the cost of home security versus the value of what could be lost in a burglary.

While home security systems enable the protection of valuables, they also provide much more in the form of piece of mind. Homeowners will be able to go on an extended holiday, or even just sleep at night, knowing that themselves, their family, and their possessions are protected.

Why Else Have an Alarm System?

As the home security industry has expanded, so too has its offerings. In that spirit, they have evolved to not only protect the home from burglary, but the home as a whole, as well as the occupants therein.

Smoke and heat alarms and carbon monoxide detectors, for instance, now provide fire safety and environmental protection, respectively. In addition, for those homes with older, disabled, or chronically ill occupants, home security companies have begun offering medical alert monitoring. For these features, as well as the traditional offerings, our [top ten home security providers](#) would be more than happy to offer their services.