

Garage Security by Steve Loader

The following is intended as a very basic guide and perhaps to get you thinking about your security. It is not all encompassing as you could easily write a book on the subject.

If a thief is determined enough and has the time and opportunity he will get in just about anywhere but I was reminded of a judge's house in Northern Ireland back in the day that a colleague was asked to survey. When he pulled up at the house a soldier armed with a machine gun stepped forward. The survey didn't take long! You also need to tailor your security to the risk, what might be more than adequate security in rural Scotland would be easily compromised in parts of Manchester.

DOORS. Ensure they are secured with good quality locks .Kite marked 5 lever mortice deadlocks on single leaf doors, make sure the second opening leaf of double doors are key locked (mortice rack bolts top and bottom or padbolts). If your doors are outward opening and the hinges are vulnerable also fit hinge bolts adjacent to the top and bottom hinges. There are also various hasp and padlocks – a lot of the cheaper ones are poor quality so look at ones that are close shackle or with enclosed shackle (you can spend well over £200 for good ones). Also look at the door material itself if this is thin or weak you may want to consider adding steel plates, making sure the plate projects over the door frame to resist jemmy attack.

Up and over doors are actually quite easy to defeat in standard form so consider fitting a pair of lockable bolts near the bottom either side. I think ERA actually do a keyed alike twin pack 5 lever mortice

lock to go in either edge of up and over doors. Roller shutters can be compressed enough to get under them by using a flattened scaffold tube. Things like pin locks or D locks fitted 2/3rds the way down the door can resist this. If you have a sectional up and over door probably the cheapest/easiest way to secure it is to drill the runners each side and insert a decent padlock

WINDOWS. They should at least have a key operated lock or if you don't use them screw them closed it's a lot cheaper. If you live in a moderate crime area internal weld mesh grills fitted into an oversize frame then rawl-bolted to the inner brickwork would be good. If in a high crime area consider getting a metal worker to make you up a set of 3/4inch bars in a heavy frame again rawlbolted to the brickwork.

TOOLS. Don't forget a lifetime collection is valuable so make sure it is properly insured. In higher crime areas you might want to look at putting them into a secure internal store, preventing theft of your toolbox might prevent a thief taking large quantities so consider securing your toolbox to a bench or wall.

BOLLARDS. These are available in many specifications even up to ones that will stop speeding trucks, ones that retract into the floor and to the basic ones you see protecting car parking spaces. Fit these behind your garage door where a thief cannot see and they may well get a surprise after opening the door.

CCTV. There is undoubtedly deterrence value but is easily defeated by a mask. Locally recorded systems just give you a nice film of your P&J being nicked. If you are loaded or have an expensive collection of cars there are remote monitored systems available. These are linked to a 24/7 centre where they often have 2 way voice communication and they can frighten off thieves before they even start.

INTRUDER ALARMS. Great deterrence but if there is no one around to respond to it going off they are pointless. So if you have lots of close neighbours who are always home and will react then a bells only system might do. More beneficial would be a system that signals a remote monitoring centre so you a guaranteed as far as possible you, a keyholder or the Police will be notified. One device I do like is an internal master blaster sounder. These operate at around 140 decibels which I can vouch for being extremely unpleasant. Fit these at a high level or in a cage so they cannot be attacked and you will drive out all but the most determined thief.

EXTERNAL. Try not have any areas where thieves can work without being disturbed. Plants such as Berberis have nasty thorns and can deter. I've even seen carpet gripper nailed to the top of fences to deter climbing, anti climb paint can be effective too. PIR Floodlights need to be where they will be seen, often they just provide thieves light to enable them to work. How often do you ignore neighbours lights as the dogs or wind sets them off?

Hope this has helped.