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Emily Peck's HOME TECHNOLOGY UPDATE



Emily Peck is a consumer and technology expert, and in 2012 won the CEDIA® award for Best Technology Feature in a Homes and Interiors Publication

WHAT'S NEW IN HOME SECURITY

If you're going on holiday soon, keep your property secure with these safety systems says **Emily Peck**

Aside from the obvious measures you can take to secure your property, there's a host of new gadgets and smart systems to deter potential intruders.

Choose from out-of-the-box technology, such as a doorphone video intercom or a motion-and-sound sensor camera, or a professional integrated security system – the latter will not only give you control over your home's safety, but will also work

in harmony with any automatically controlled window treatments, lighting and audio/visual features.

'It's important to consider the type of security you want,' says Simon Minor of Go-Green Electrical Brighton, a member of RatedPeople.com. 'Do you want video surveillance? Would you pay a monthly fee to have a linked security service system that sends alerts to the police? And how much would you be prepared to

spend? For example, a simple PIR (Passive Infrared) light can be very effective at giving excellent security coverage for large areas, and in some cases just one PIR can detect intruder movement in several areas. These systems cost from £80 for very basic to around £300 for good four-to-five-bedroom house coverage, but this increases as you add accessories.'

However much you plan to spend, here's a range of products to consider.

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NO KEY, EASY ACCESS

Want to go for a run without having to take your keys, or perhaps your keys are too bulky for a clutch bag on a night out? The solution is the Keyless Digital Rim Door Lock, £129.99, from Yale, which lets you open your door at the touch of a button. It enables you to access and secure your home using a four-to-12-digit PIN of your choice; a temporary code can be created if you want to let other users into your home. It can be fitted on timber doors and comes in polished brass or chrome or satin nickel.

GARAGE CHECK

Garador, the garage door company, has brought out a new range of remote controls that make it easy to check automatically whether an out-of-sight garage door is closed. This means you won't have to go outside and brave the weather to check the door at night. The remotes come in black or white high-gloss piano lacquer finishes, and are sold with Garamatic operators, which open garage doors automatically when triggered by a hand-held transmitter. The Garamatic 10 operator plus the new remote control costs £492.



*CUSTOM ELECTRONIC DESIGN AND INSTALLATION ASSOCIATION

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SECURITY UPDATE

CHOOSE A FULLY INTEGRATED SOLUTION

Ideal for people planning a renovation or a new build, a smart home system will let you monitor your entire property from virtually anywhere. For example, a Crestron system (below) can stream live footage from cameras to your smartphone or computer, wherever you are, and can be used as a video intercom system to check who is at the door. You can disarm alarm systems remotely – to let a neighbour into the house to feed the cat while you're out, for example – and reactivate it when they leave. You can also link it to a touchscreen gadget to set the alarm when you're in bed. Prices start from £2,850 and depend on the project size.



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PICTURE-PERFECT FOOTAGE

If you want the very latest in security surveillance with outstanding image quality, you might want to consider an option that will record footage in full high-definition 1080p in your home. Choose a system such as the new Swann Security Platinum-HD system (above), which costs £1,199.99. It features four cameras that connect to a powerful digital video recorder capable of recording high-definition videos, with real-time live viewing on your smartphone or tablet, and video playback.



FLOODLIGHT ALERT

For a quick-fix measure, install a PIR (Passive Infrared) light in your front and back garden to illuminate your property's exterior when anyone approaches. The Steinel HS300 300W PIR Sensor Floodlight, £84 from Wayfair.co.uk, has a time setting of up to 15 seconds and provides an angle of coverage of up to 240 degrees, with a maximum reach of 1.2 metres.

EXPERT ADVICE CHECKLIST



What are the main things you should consider when fitting a security system?
Jeremy Stewart

of Swann Communications explains the key points.

how many cameras you will need for your surveillance system (and how powerful they should be).

- Check what parts of your home are the most vulnerable and consider the required camera coverage to protect the areas you would like secured – such as a garden shed, garage, cars, front door or places where you store your valuables.

- Assess the size of your property to see what type of system you would require. You can choose from a one-, two-, four- or eight-camera security system.

- Check the length of your driveway, street and home, as this will determine the type of camera you will need to protect your property – for example, wide-angle or long-distance.

- Make sure the front entrance isn't obscured by trees or large shrubs, for example, and that you have a clear line of sight to the street.

- Check your internet connection is suitable for remote viewing so that you can easily view your home 24/7, wherever you are in the world.

- Consider the lighting conditions outdoors, as this will determine

- Opt for motion sensor lights so that the cameras can detect the clearest images.

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LATEST HOME SECURITY CAMERAS

Home surveillance cameras are savvier than ever before. Use one of the latest designs to check up on an empty house, or make sure that pets aren't getting up to mischief while you're out...



1 The Wi-Fi-enabled HomeMonitor Indoor plug-and-play secure camera system from Y-cam (above) lets you view footage of your home from your tablet, computer or smartphone wherever you are in the world. It costs £149.99 and comes with seven days' free unlimited storage for your videos, but if you need footage saved for a longer period you can upgrade for £29.99 for a year.



3 The Samsung Techwin Smart Home Camera (left), gives you easy remote home surveillance from your iPhone running iOS 6.3, iPad running iOS 5.3, Android device or PC. Priced from £129 from Amazon, it has a 3x digital zoom and 68-degree camera angle. If the unit detects motion or sound in your home, when connected to the internet, it will send an alert to your device, and can upload a 30-second video clip to your YouTube account – with access protected by your login password. Its two-way audio allows you to talk to family at home via a live video stream.



2 The Philips In.Sight Wireless Home Monitor Duo (right) will watch over your home and stream video to your iPhone or iPad while you're out. If any motion or sound is detected, it will send an alert. It comes with two wall-mountable cameras with adjustable viewing angles and zoom, and costs £179.95 from Apple Store.



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WHAT TO CONSIDER



Kris Hogg,
MD at home
technology
company
Konnectiv, gives
his expert advice
on choosing an
alarm system.

■ First, consider why you want an alarm. Is it to be a deterrent to keep burglars away, or is it to secure your home and alert the police should it be activated? Or, do you want to integrate it with CCTV and the rest of your house?

■ A simple DIY kit will offer some security, usually with occupancy sensors fitted in your rooms to

detect if someone is in there. These kits are easy to fit but won't cover all areas of your home. They are fine if your neighbours are at home all day and would come and investigate if they heard the alarm go off in your absence.

■ You may ask what happens if you are in bed and someone breaks in. Yes, you may have a panic button by the bed, but what happens when it's pressed? To offer complete peace of mind, you should be looking for a monitored system, one that notifies a control centre where they verify the alarm and call the police should the need arise. So, if you hit the panic button, the police are called immediately. If

an alarm goes off because you made a mistake, they will call you to confirm, via passwords, that it was an error. If you are not in or they get the wrong response then the police will be called.

■ The most advanced systems are installed by a professional, who will survey your home to identify the access points and install a system that covers all vulnerable areas. If you have pets, they can fit sensors that ignore them, and they will build intelligence into the system, including the ability for your alarm to text you if triggered.

To find a reputable integrator with security experience, visit Cedia.co.uk.