

# SPY + SURVIVAL BRIEFING

SECRETS, TIPS & LIFESAVING STRATEGIES FROM A FORMER CIA OFFICER

## SEVEN WAYS TO KEEP YOUR FAMILY SAFER

Dear Friend,

Recently, I met with a 50-year-old widow who hired me for some security consulting. The woman lives in a pristine neighborhood in a wealthy area of town. But in recent years, it seems, more and more people are out of work and more “scary characters” can be seen walking her streets.

One night, two men started pounding on the woman’s door telling her to let them in. Obviously, she did not open the door. She immediately called the police while she and her 15-year-old son locked themselves in the bathroom.

The two men eventually kicked in the front door, ran through the house, and broke down the bathroom door. One of the men held a knife to the 15-year-old’s throat and demanded that the woman give them all of her money and her electronics such as cellphones and laptops. The woman complied and gave them everything they asked for.

Unfortunately, this didn’t satisfy the men. The woman became sure they were going to kill both her and her son. As the men started looking around the house, the woman and her son were able to find a split second to run and lock themselves in a bedroom.

The son was trying to climb out a second story window to jump to safety and ended up falling and knocking himself unconscious.

All the while, the burglars were trying to kick in the bedroom door when a few neighbors finally heard all of the commotion. They ran over and started yelling for the intruders to get out. The two men fled the house without being caught.

The woman’s son spent two weeks in the hospital with broken ribs and a punctured lung.

Luckily, the woman and her son are alive, but this is clearly a terrifying situation that will impact the woman and her son for the rest of their lives.

So what did I tell my client? And how can you make sure this never happens to you?

First, to avoid becoming a victim of a home invasion, you want to do something pretty simple.

As soon as you’re finished reading this report, I want you to walk outside of your house and stare at all of the houses surrounding you. Look at the houses to your left, to the right, in front of you, and behind you.

Then ask yourself the following question: Of all the houses I am looking at now, if I were a criminal, which would be the easiest target?

It’s easy to do once you know what to look for. For instance, if one of your neighbors hasn’t mowed their lawn in weeks, they’re a target — an unkempt yard is a big invitation for a burglar.

On the other hand, if all of your neighbors have a blue ADT security sign stuck in their front yard and you don’t, then I would rush out (or go online) and get a sign for your yard ASAP.

Let me give you a few other examples: Do all of your neighbors leave their garage door open when they’re at home and you’re the only smart one who closes your garage door at all times? Or maybe you have a security camera at your front door entrance (even if it’s a fake one) and your next-door neighbors don’t?

My point is if a burglar is “casing” your neighborhood, he is going to look for the easiest target. I encourage you

to go outside today and make sure that your house looks a heck of a lot less appealing than those surrounding it — and if, for some reason, your house looks like a criminal's dream, then make the necessary changes as soon as you can.

Here's an easy checklist:

**Step 1: Case the neighborhood.** Walk outside and observe your house and your neighbors' houses. See what you need to do to make your house less inviting to criminals.

**Step 2: “Harden” your front door.** Criminals aren't exactly the most creative of people. The majority of break-ins and home invasions are through the front door, which is what happened to the woman in the story above. So make sure your front door is solid metal or solid wood... Have a deadbolt with a one-inch throw bolt... and have a heavy-duty strike plate with three-inch wood screws.

Also, resist the temptation to have a “pretty and decorative” glass front door. If you have one of these doors, all a criminal has to do is smash the glass and reach in to unlock your front door, which can be done easily in just a few seconds.

**Step 3: Get an alarm.** As I mentioned earlier, you can go online and buy a blue ADT alarm sign and stick it in your front lawn, which is certainly a good idea. But obviously, it's better to have the real thing.

The woman I had the phone call with did not have an alarm in her home. If she had, there's a good chance the blaring alarm sound would have scared the two men off. Plus, it would have dispatched police to her house.

There are a lot of alarm companies out there, and the top-name brands are all pretty good. But keep in mind those uncreative criminals are getting smarter these days and will often cut your phone lines. Therefore, make sure the company offers a wireless backup for your alarm system in case the phone lines get damaged during an attempted break-in (most of them do).

**Step 4: Get an alarm for when you travel.** I recommend getting a door stopper alarm when you're traveling with your family. This alarm is simply a wedge that you slip under a hotel room door, so if someone tries to open the door, an extremely loud alarm sounds. As an added bonus, the wedge makes the door difficult to open. The door stopper alarm is relatively inexpensive and costs only \$10–15. I'd recommend the [\*\*GE Personal Security Door Stop Alarm\*\*](#), available on Amazon.

**Step 5: Never answer your front door.** There isn't a month that goes by where I don't read a story about some “damsel in distress” knocking on a front door. As soon as the homeowner opens the front door, two guys jump out of the bushes and attack the homeowner.

If someone approaches your front door needing help, offer to call the police for them, but do not open the front door.

Don't open the door for any salesmen or people trying to pitch a survey. The fact is before a burglar plans on breaking into a house, they will often knock first to see if anyone's home. If you answer, they'll probably just ask for directions or try to sell you a vacuum (while at the same time “sizing you up”). Whatever the excuse, don't answer. If you'd like to help, give them directions through the door and tell them you don't want to open it because it would set off your alarm.

**Step 6: Keep your travels to yourself.** Do not announce your vacations or daylong travels on Facebook or any other social networking sites. It is a lot easier than you think to look up your address and find where you live from a simple Facebook post. Criminals know this and spend hours casing Facebook to see if anyone in their area posts that they're taking a long vacation or are going out of town. Once a criminal sees this, they simply look up a person's address and plan their break-in.

**Step 7: Arm up.** The final and most important step in keeping your family safe is getting a firearm. You may not want to carry concealed and have a firearm on you at all times, but you should definitely consider getting one for home defense purposes.

Recently, I was at a dinner party where a doctor approached me. He had heard I ran a security business and did

firearms training. He told me that he worked in the ER and that he used to think guns were horrible — he was firmly anti-gun.

That all changed one night when he heard a strange noise coming from his basement. He looked out the upstairs window and saw a man with a crowbar trying to break in through the basement door. The doctor grabbed a baseball bat and ran into the basement, all the while screaming and yelling at the man to leave. His wife called the police, who arrived about 20 minutes later. Thankfully, the burglar was long gone.

The doctor felt so helpless during the experience that he realized he needed a better way to protect his family. He ended up getting a gun, and asked me to do some private training with him so that he was more confident in handling his new gun.

You and I know that the police cannot arrive in a split second. In those 20 minutes you're waiting for them to respond, it's up to you to protect and defend your family. A firearm is the best way to do this, as long as you know how to safely and responsibly use the firearm.

Stay safe,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jason Hanson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jason Hanson