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Homeowner Advice: Kiss Your Keys Goodbye!

By Steph

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I always like to hear about new ideas that really work well, are easy to implement, and not expensive. Here's one that is so simple, you'll wonder why more people don't do it, that is install a digital door lock on the doors in your house. Hey, these work great on cars—why not houses?

A digital door lock is simply a fancy name for a pushbutton, combination, or keyless entry lock. With a digital door, you won't have to risk your keys will be lost, stolen, or copied. There is no AC wiring or batteries, so you won't be locked out during power failures. And you'll never have to pay a locksmith to change out your locks—you can do this yourself.

Digital door locks are available nowadays with a hacksaw-proof deadbolts for standard doors, sliding doors, cabinets, even outdoor gates & fences like around a pool or play area. You can even get locks with a keypad on both sides or with a spring, so door automatically locks each time the door is closed.

Most digital door locks have with easy-to-change codes and some even come with a key override option so that a master key can be used to open the lock as well as the combination.

Some models are big and clunky and look like they would do best in an industrial setting like a data center or lab, but others have really nice designs and finishes that go quite well in a home setting.

What are the things to look out for when choosing a lock? Pretty much what you would expect:

1. Make sure you get a high-quality lock with a good warranty, at least 5 years, from a reputable dealer who also has a clear, no-nonsense return policy.
2. Find a dealer that will sell you parts, just in case you need them.
3. If you think you'll be purchasing more than one, also ask about volume discounts, even if you purchase them at different times.

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4. Look for a dealer that carries several models and finishes, so you can get exactly what you want.
5. Check out the installation instructions. These days, any homeowner equipped with a phillips head screw driver should pretty much be able to install these locks themselves and change the combination in just a matter of minutes.
6. Make sure you know up front what the tax, shipping and handling costs are.
7. Finally, shop around. Use the Internet to find sites that sell digital door locks. It's fast, easy, and secure.

Homeowner

Homeowner's Insurance Advice: Taking Inventory Of Your Home

By Elizabeth Newberry

If you're in the market for homeowner's insurance, or even if you already have homeowner's insurance, here's some advice: take inventory of your home.

There are two reasons to take inventory of your home for your homeowner's insurance policy. The first reason is many homeowner's insurance companies will ask for an inventory of your home before they offer you a policy. The second reason is having an inventory of your home will make it easier for you to prove what was stolen or damaged, therefore making the process of filing a claim and being reimbursed much quicker.

However, taking inventory of your home goes beyond just jotting down a list of expensive items and tucking it away in a drawer somewhere. Keep reading for advice on how to properly take inventory of your home for your homeowner's insurance.

Make a detailed list of everything you own. Don't panic - you can exclude things such as that shabby rug in the guest room that you only keep around to hide Fido's first accident before he was house-broken, but do make sure to include everything of value - art, jewelry, expensive china and silverware, electronics - everything. Take pictures of the items, dig up receipts if you have them, and even consider taking a video of these items, as well. For electronics, you should also note the make, model, serial number, etc.

Regardless of how you choose to document these items, don't keep the documentation in your home - that defeats the purpose should your house burn down. Keep the documentation in the bank, at your parents', in a big safe you've buried in a secret location in a far off country - where ever. Just not in your home.

Finally, take your list, and other documentation if you like, to your homeowner's insurance agent to find out if everything you own is covered under your policy. You may need to purchase additional insurance

if it's not.



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