

WELCOME TO MY HOME

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By Arleen M. Kaptur

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Wherever you live, and whatever style home you have, it should be a place that reflects who you are and where you want to be.

If you live in a country setting, woodland area, or in a rustic cabin, you can create an atmosphere of comfort, relaxation, and friendship. A simple wooden or metal "Greetings" sign by your main entrance will let others know that you welcome their visit and are extending a hand of friendship. Adding a "nature" theme to your sign gives it personalization and is fun. A bear, fish, or deer will lend a real "rustic" feeling to your doorway. If your hobby is camping, or backpacking, add a theme to reflect your interests – make it truly "your" greeting. A welcome sign of any kind creates an atmosphere of good-will to people who come by.

If you live in a city, town, or village, you still can add an entrance decoration that lends itself to your interests, hobbies, or lifestyle. Rugged, dainty, elegant, country, homey, or business-like, whatever your choice, this is the first impression someone will see. It will give them an instant first glimpse into who you are. Remember the old adage that first impressions are the important ones. Give some thought to your sign and let it paint a simple picture. As individual as your signature is, your sign should also be personal and reflective of your personality and lifestyle.

Furnishings also should be stamped with your personal touch. They can be simple, exotic, or handed down from previous generations. Whatever your taste in furniture, let it be comfortable and friendly. If you give an impression of "Don't Touch", people will not want to stay. They may admire, but they won't visit. If you have valuables, place them in curio cabinets, on shelves, or in unique places where they will come to no harm, but others may still enjoy seeing them.

Accent touches lend so much to our homes. Pillows, pictures, quilts, flowers, and so on give color, texture, and speak for the people who live in this house. Bathrooms should not be an afterthought. We do spend some of our time in these usually small rooms, and sometimes they are employed as places to relax and hide from the world. Decorate them with everyone in mind. Gear the accessories to

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everyone. Choose some rugged and handsome and other pretty, and feminine. If there are children, adding a whimsical touch here or there gives a child the feeling that it is their home too and they are an important, contributing resident.

Color is the most fun to work with. You can change it inexpensively and you can mix and match. Add seasonal favorites or holiday hues. Nature colors are beautiful and interesting, but favorite colors should be a major part of your scheme. Compromise always lends itself to peace on the homefront. If you choose the main color, let others pick the secondary colors. This way, however you decorate, it will be a true reflection of everyone and not only one person's choices.

It really doesn't matter how big or small your home is. It's of no real importance if you own, rent, or live with family or friends. What is paramount is that your home is you and whoever else you may share it with. If everyone contributes and has a say then it becomes a "family" home. If we lend ourselves to sharing our lives with grandparents and the treasures they give us, we give a definite feeling of continuity with their presence or their possessions. We also show pride in our heritage and backgrounds. Books, paintings, needlework, pottery, or whatever is important to you, display it proudly and let others admire and enjoy it. Keeping special items hidden will keep their beauty and special thoughts under wraps. Even a small child can appreciate texture, color, and he/she can take delight in "pretty" things or treasured objects.

Decorating where we live is really an extension of who we are. Give it some thought and go with what is comfortable for you and your family. Rearranging, redecorating, or just adding and subtracting items makes our home fun, functional, enjoyable, and a pleasure to come back to. Guests will also feel more comfortable and at ease when they visit. They won't feel that everything around them is untouchable and breakable. They will feel better, you will feel proud, and everyone can concentrate on great conversation, food, and other neighborly pursuits.

Enjoy!

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Arleen Kaptur has written numerous articles, cookbooks, and the novel: *SEARCHING FOR AUSTIN JAMES* Websites: <http://www.arleensite.com> <http://www.Arleens-RusticLiving.com>  
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### **Home Security: Options To Consider**

**By Matthew Noel**

Today, there is a large, very important need for home security. There seems to be no limit to what the 'bad guy' can accomplish. They can come in when you are right there sleeping. They can monitor your home in ways in which you will simply never be able to tell. And, they can provide you with a terrifying approach to life each and every day after they have attacked you. By using effective home security, you can really cut down on the times and the abilities of these things happening to you.

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Home security is quite versatile. There is something out there for everyone on any budget. In fact, simply putting a home security tag in your window from a company can be a deterrent for robberies itself. Nonetheless, there are many things to consider. First, consider probably the best option and that is monitoring systems that work to monitor the home when you are not there. Should something trigger it, it will react and someone can see just what is happening or can send someone down to look at it.

Other options in home security including home alarms that when triggered can call police or emergency services. You can also use a variety of locks that cannot be broken into as well. There are so many ways in which you can effectively protect your home that there is no reason not to.

When it comes to protecting your family and your home, nothing should stand in your way. You need to safeguard all aspects of that home so that you can sleep easy every night knowing that someone or something is out there looking out for you. And, when you are away from your home, you need to know that it and all of your possessions are safe as well. Home security can do these things for you.

For more information please see



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