



# Safe as houses

Break-ins can take their toll, emotionally and financially. So we've tested the latest door locks to help you beat the burglars

The average cost to homeowners of a burglary now exceeds £1,000 – and this doesn't take into account the emotional burden. Although police figures show that the number of recorded burglaries actually fell by 5 per cent in 2005/06, almost one in 40 households suffered at least one burglary this year.

Yet by taking a few simple precautions you can significantly reduce the risk that you face. According to the latest British Crime Survey, households with no home security measures were almost ten times more likely to have been victims of burglary than households where there were simple security measures, such as locks on doors and windows.

We tested a range of deadlocks and Euro cylinders for security, durability and ease of installation for the homeowner. Deadlocks are key-operated locks,

without a handle or latch, that are mounted in a slot in the edge of a door. When you turn the key, the bolt is secured in position. This means that a thief can't simply smash a nearby glass panel and try to open the door from the inside. Insurance companies often insist deadlocks are fitted to all external doors.

Euro cylinders are the standard locks in PVC doors – deadlocks will not fit. The cylindrical chamber of a Euro cylinder slots into the door's face and secures it.

All those we tested performed well and offered decent levels of protection. But there were some clear winners, with all of our Best Buys achieving very high marks for the levels of security they offered. And with Best Buy deadlocks from only £27 and Euro cylinders for £12, you won't have to break the bank to protect your home.

**Make sure that your locks meet the demands of your insurer**

## Insurance

### Fitting strong locks could cut your insurance premiums

One of the critical things when fitting locks is to make sure that your locks meet the demands of your insurer, so that if you do suffer a break-in, you are covered for your losses. Shockingly, the Home Office estimates that almost half of all domestic break-ins are not covered by insurance. Some insurers have a list of approved locks, so check before getting in a locksmith.

Certain insurers offer discounts on your premiums for extra security measures. Among others, Bradford & Bingley, a Best Buy in our latest house insurance report (p42), offers discounts to customers who have burglar alarms and approved locks or who are members of Neighbourhood Watch schemes.

## Finding a locksmith

**If you want the peace of mind a professional provides, we show you where to locate them**

While replacing a Euro cylinder is a fairly simple task that anyone should be able to manage in just a few minutes, fitting a deadlock can be difficult, particularly if you need to drill a new hole in your door.

Unless you are an experienced or competent DIYer, you should contact a professional locksmith to install your lock. The Master Locksmiths Association publishes a list of approved locksmiths on its website ([www.locksmiths.co.uk](http://www.locksmiths.co.uk)) or call 01327 262255.

Expect to spend between £70 and £150 to have your lock fitted, depending on location.



**A peep through the keyhole at our lock-testing secrets**

### Strong arm of the law

To assess the strength of the deadlocks in our test, we use a special machine (see above), to replicate a burglar's attempt to force the lock. This subjects each deadlock to more than a ton of pressure, as we try to bend the bolts or cause them to retract.

We also give the Euro cylinders a thorough working over, with each one having to endure ten minutes of drilling as we attempt to break their mechanisms.

### Weather and water

To test the durability of each lock, we begin by assessing how well each lock can withstand severe weather conditions. We chill the locks in a giant freezer to –20°C and then heat to 80°C, before re-examining their mechanisms.

We also examine the effects of corrosion, by immersing the locks in a salt bath at 98 per cent humidity, which simulates a year's use in a coastal area.

Finally, we replicate a lifetime's use by operating each deadlock's mechanism 50,000 times, while the Euro cylinder locks are put through the same process 100,000 times.

## Contacts

**Banham** 020 7622 5151  
[www.banham.com](http://www.banham.com)

**Bramah** 020 7486 1739  
[www.bramah.co.uk](http://www.bramah.co.uk)

**Chubb** 01902 364 093  
[www.chubblocks.co.uk](http://www.chubblocks.co.uk)

**Era** 01922 490 000  
[www.era-security.com](http://www.era-security.com)

**Eurospec** 01254 274100  
[www.eurospec.co.uk](http://www.eurospec.co.uk)

**Ingersoll** 01902 366 911  
[www.ingersolllocks.co.uk](http://www.ingersolllocks.co.uk)

**Mul-T-Lock** 01536 461 111  
[www.mul-t-lock.co.uk](http://www.mul-t-lock.co.uk)

**Sterling** 0113 250 3603  
[www.sterlinglocks.com](http://www.sterlinglocks.com)

**Union** 020 8688 5191  
[www.uniononline.co.uk](http://www.uniononline.co.uk)

**Wickes** 0870 608 9001  
[www.wickes.co.uk](http://www.wickes.co.uk)

**Yale** 01902 364 647  
[www.yalelock.com](http://www.yalelock.com)

**Zone** 0118 977 0027  
[www.zonesecurity.com](http://www.zonesecurity.com)



## 1 DEADLOCK

## 83% Ingersoll London Line SC110 £165

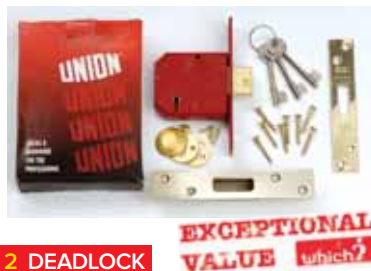
This promises 'ultimate security' and it definitely delivers. It may be the most expensive lock on test but it achieved five-star ratings all round.

As well as providing excellent security, the lock passed all our durability tests, successfully operating at extremes of temperature and proving resistant to corrosion. Our experts also found it easy to install and were impressed by the clear instructions.

**WORTH KNOWING** This is a hook lock. These locks hook into the door frame, preventing the door being pulled up or out.

Available Independents and online **Type** Hook Materials Steel and brass **Number of keys** 2

WHICH?  
BEST BUY



## 2 DEADLOCK

## 83% Union J-2134E £27

This Union model demonstrates that you don't have to spend a fortune to get excellent security. Like the Ingersoll lock, it was awarded five stars in every category by our experts. And it achieved this impressive feat despite costing only £27. That's £138 cheaper than the Ingersoll.

As if this wasn't good enough value, the lock also comes with a third key, one more than either of our other Best Buy deadlocks, cutting down the number of expensive duplicates you need to get cut.

**WE LIKE** It's particularly great value if you have lots of external doors.

Available Independents and online **Type** Standard Materials Steel and brass **Number of keys** 3

WHICH?  
BEST BUY



## 3 DEADLOCK

## 82% Bramah NS17 £107

Not far behind our other Best Buys, this also scored very highly for security and installation. In fact, it received our highest overall security rating.

The lock did suffer slight corrosion in our durability tests, with discoloration to the lock plate. But this is not a serious concern and could be averted through regular oiling. This model was the only single-sided lock in our test. Although these are more commonly used in offices, being single-sided will not affect performance.

**WE FOUND** A version that can be locked from both sides, the MD17, is also available.

Available Independents and online **Type** Standard Materials Steel **Number of keys** 2

WHICH?  
BEST BUY



## 11 EURO CYLINDER

## 72% Chubb M3 £52

This model was the top-performing Euro cylinder lock on test and is a great all-round lock. Our experts were impressed by its performance across the board, making it a clear Best Buy.

Like each of our Best Buy Euro cylinders, the M3 is extremely long lasting, passing all our durability tests. **WORTH KNOWING** The lock wasn't supplied with a fixing screw to secure it in place, so you'll need to reuse the one from your existing lock or buy a new one.

Available Independents and online **Materials** Alloy **Number of keys** 2

WHICH?  
BEST BUY



## 12 EURO CYLINDER

## 69% Mul-T-Lock Interactive £72

Not far behind the Chubb, the Mul-T-Lock Interactive also offers excellent levels of security. However, it was the most expensive Euro cylinder on test.

The lock doesn't come with any instructions on how to install it, and so didn't score as highly as the Chubb, but our experts still found it very simple to fit.

**WORTH KNOWING** The manufacturer claims that the cylinder uses a unique pinning system, making the lock resistant to picking and drilling.

Available Independents and online **Materials** Brass **Number of keys** 2

WHICH?  
BEST BUY



## 13 EURO CYLINDER

## 69% Zone 1500 Series £12

One of the cheapest Euro cylinder locks on test, the Zone once again proves that you can secure your home at minimal cost.

As with the Mul-T-Lock, there were no instructions but again we found it easy to install. And while our testers experienced no problems with durability, the manufacturer offers a generous ten-year guarantee should you have any problems.

**WE LIKE** The Zone comes with a third key, reducing the number of duplicates you need to have cut.

Available Independents and online **Materials** Brass **Number of keys** 3

EXCEPTIONAL  
VALUE which?

WHICH?  
BEST BUY

## Checklist

Aside from fitting Best Buy locks, these tips should help you keep your home secure

■ **Strength** Remember quality locks are only as strong as the door and frame to which they are fitted. Wooden doors should be solid and at least 4.4cm thick. Check that the frame is well secured, and if it is weak, replace it.

■ **Vigilance** Fit doorchains and spyholes to your front door.

■ **More locks** Patio doors are very vulnerable to thieves. Additional locks should be fitted to stop the sliding frame being lifted off the tracks.

■ **Key facts** Keep your keys safe and away from doors and windows.

■ **Alarmed** Have a visible burglar alarm installed and monitored.

■ **Outdoors** Keep your garage and garden shed secured, and keep tools and ladders out of sight.

■ **Fire escape** Fit locks on all external doors and locks to all windows. But also think about how you could quickly evacuate the house if there is a fire.

MODEL	SPECIFICATION			WHICH? TEST PERFORMANCE			SCORE %
	PRICE (£)	NUMBER OF KEYS	SIZE (cm) (hxdxw)	INSTALLATION	DURABILITY	SECURITY	
DEADLOCKS							
1 <b>INGERSOLL</b> London Line SC110	165	2	19x5.6x2.8	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	83
2 <b>UNION</b> J-2134E	27	3	14.4x6.4x2.5	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	83
3 <b>BRAMAH</b> NS17	107	2	17x4x2.5	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	82
4 <b>CHUBB</b> 3G114E	42	3	13.3x6.7x2.5	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	81
5 <b>CHUBB</b> 3K74E	52	3	15.2x6.7x2.5	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	81
6 <b>WICKES</b> 5-LEVER DEADLOCK	19	2	13.5x6.4x2.6	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	76
7 <b>YALE</b> PM562	25	2	14.4x6.4x2.5	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	76
8 <b>BANHAM</b> M2002	142	2	21x7x2.8	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	75
9 <b>ERA</b> Fortress	25	2	13.5x6.4x2.5	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	71
10 <b>STERLING</b> MLD526BS	21	2	12x6.4x2.5	★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	69

MODEL	SPECIFICATION			WHICH? TEST PERFORMANCE			SCORE %
	PRICE (£)	NUMBER OF KEYS	MAX LENGTH (cm)	INSTALLATION	DURABILITY	SECURITY	
EURO CYLINDERS							
11 CHUBB M3	52	2	0.7	★★★★★	★★★★★★	★★★★★	72
12 MUL-T-LOCK Interactive	72	2	0.7	★★★★	★★★★★★	★★★★★	69
13 ZONE 1500 series	12	3	0.7	★★★★	★★★★★★	★★★★★	69
14 EUROSPEC MP10	20	3	0.7	★★★★	★★★★★★	★★★★	65
15 YALE Pro Key	49	2	0.7	★★	★★★★★★	★★★★★	65
16 WICKES 40/40	11	3	0.8	★★★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	61
17 ERA 4067-31	22	2	0.7	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	60
18 STERLING EPB023	8	3	1	★★★★	★★★★★★	★★★★	60
19 MUL-T-LOCK Garrison G7	26	2	0.7	★★	★★★★	★★★★	56

## Neighbourhood Watch

How vigilant neighbours can cut burglaries and insurance costs

Neighbourhood Watch was introduced in Britain in 1982 and has grown rapidly, now covering over a quarter of households. As well as deterring criminals, schemes can foster close ties with police and are viewed favourably by insurers.

If you would like to join or set up a Neighbourhood Watch scheme in

your area, contact the crime prevention co-ordinator at your nearest police station. They will give you further information or put you in contact with the Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator of the established scheme.

For further information, visit [www.neighbourhoodwatch.uk.com](http://www.neighbourhoodwatch.uk.com)

### USING THE TABLE

We tested leading deadlocks and Euro cylinders. The more stars the better.

#### Specifications

**Price** For Best Buys, we give the cheapest, widely available, high-street price as we went to press.

Prices for other models are a guide to what you would expect to pay. **Number of keys** Most come with two keys. But a third is handy.

#### Test performance

**Installation** The difficulty of fitting the lock and clarity of the instructions.

#### Durability

Resistance to extremes of temperature and prolonged usage. **Security** Strength and ability to withstand attack.

#### Score

This ignores price and is based on:  
Security **60%**  
Durability **20%**  
Installation **20%**