

A “Home Alone”–Inspired Holiday Safety Check

The holidays can turn your house into its own little planet with lights twinkling, deliveries landing on the porch, and people coming and going at odd hours. Unfortunately, it’s also a season when burglars do their own version of *Home Alone*, minus the slapstick and with a lot more opportunism. So let’s borrow the movie’s core idea, swap the paint cans for practical steps, and build a holiday “Kevin-proof” plan that keeps you, your guests, and your stuff safer.

Make Your Home Look Lived-In

Homes are most vulnerable when they look empty. In *Home Alone*, the house practically announces that no one is there the moment routines disappear.

What helps:

- Use timers or smart bulbs in multiple rooms, not just one lamp
- Vary lighting patterns so it looks natural, not staged
- Set a TV or radio to turn on for a few hours in the evening
- If traveling, ask a neighbor to park in your driveway once or twice

Lock Down Easy Entry Points

Kevin’s intruders start by testing doors and windows. Real-world burglars do the same.

Before errands or travel, do a quick perimeter check:

- Front and back doors
- Garage service doors
- First-floor windows
- Sliding doors (add a dowel or security bar in the track)

Make sure deadbolts fully extend and strike plates are secured with longer screws. Remember: a lock is only as strong as the door frame and the structure it is fastened into.

Treat Your Porch Like the Stage It Is

Holiday deliveries pile up fast, and visible packages are basically gift-wrapped advertisements.

- Reduce temptation by:
- Redirecting packages to lockers or pickup locations
- Using delivery instructions to hide packages from view
- Asking a neighbor to collect deliveries if you’re away

A porch stacked with boxes is an invitation, not décor.



Use Light and Visibility to Your Advantage

Motion lights and cameras are the modern version of Kevin's alarm system, with no tarantulas required.

- Install motion-activated exterior lighting at entry points
- Place cameras where they capture faces (porch, driveway, back door)
- Make sure alerts are turned on and actually reach you or a trusted neighbor

Visibility is one of the strongest deterrents.

Don't Create New Hazards Inside

Holiday décor shouldn't introduce new safety risks.

- Keep entryways well-lit and free of cords and tie-downs
- Secure rugs and avoid slippery walkways
- If hosting, shovel and salt outdoor paths and check railings

Holiday injuries aren't festive, and they're rarely funny to insurance companies.

Keep Your Plans Offline

Announcing travel plans online is the digital equivalent of taping your itinerary to the front door.

- Post vacation photos after you're home
- Avoid signaling absence with a dark house and empty driveway when possible

Less sharing now means fewer problems later.

Have a "What If" Plan

If you hear someone trying a door, don't investigate like a movie hero.

- Turn on lights
- Make noise
- Call for help
- Contact law enforcement if you suspect an intruder

Keep phones charged, know your address, and have a simple way for family members to communicate quickly.

Final Takeaway

The holidays should feel warm, not wary. A few simple steps, such as realistic routines, tougher entry points, smarter visibility, safer walkways, and a quieter online footprint, can make your home a far less attractive target.

Keep the magic. Lose the mayhem.