

People react in different ways to having their home broken into. For some people, housebreaking is an irritating inconvenience, for others it causes strong reactions. It can be hard to come to terms with the knowledge that your private possessions and personal space have been disturbed by a stranger. It's not unusual to feel angry or insecure and to find that your normal routine is disrupted.

These reactions are normal and usually temporary.

Talking to a Victim Support volunteer can help. Victim Support's trained volunteers are aware that everyone reacts in different ways. They can provide confidential, free, support and advice, through a home visit, an office appointment or over the phone.

If you have children, they may be particularly upset. Encourage them to talk to you and let them know you understand.

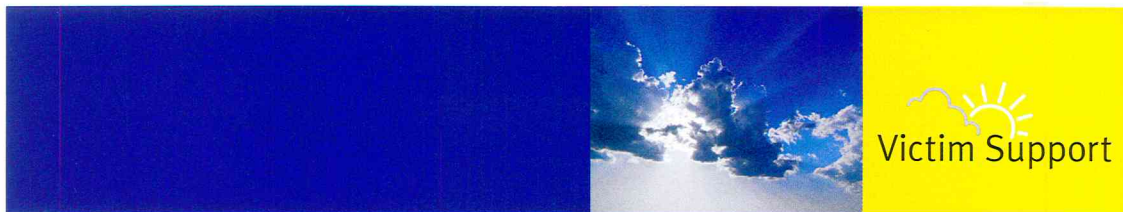
## What should you do first?

Make a list of all stolen items and any damage to your home or property. You will need this for the police and for any insurance claim. Give the police full details of any loss and damage, including any stolen items or damage you discover later. This is important if someone is caught and convicted, as he/she may be ordered by the court to pay you compensation for your loss.

If credit cards, bank cards or cheque books have been stolen, inform the bank or credit card company immediately. If all your cards are insured through one company, contact them at once.

Contact the Benefits Agency and Housing Department about replacing stolen pension, benefits or rent books. Theft of official documents, such as passports or driving licences should be notified to the issuing authorities as soon as possible.

You may need emergency repairs. If you are a tenant, your landlord, the council or housing association should arrange this.



#### If you have any practical difficulties, Victim Support can help

Victim Support does not give financial help but we can:

- tell you where you may get financial help
- help you liaise with different agencies
- help you investigate insurance cover
- give crime prevention advice
- support you if the case goes to court
- tell you about Criminal Injuries Compensation to which you may be entitled if violence was used against you

#### Making your home more secure

If you are worried about the security of your home, Victim Support can give you crime prevention information. For more specialist advice, your local police station can arrange for a Crime Prevention Officer to visit you.

#### Do

- secure windows and doors before you go out
- leave one room – not the hall – lit up if you are out at night
- lock garages and sheds and keep ladders inside
- ask someone you trust to watch your home while you're away
- mark your valuables with your post code and house number using an ultra violet pen

#### Don't

- leave door keys under mats or flower pots
- keep large amounts of cash at home
- let strangers in without checking their identity
- forget to cancel milk and papers before you go away
- leave packaging from new appliances outside your home

Call Victim Support on the number below or find your local service under Victim Support in the telephone directory or from our website at [www.victimsupportsco.org.uk](http://www.victimsupportsco.org.uk).

# Call us 0845 603 9213