

LAPD warns homeowners about a simple trick burglars use to disable home security systems



Figure 1 File image of a Ring doorbell camera. The LAPD has put out an advisory on burglars using devices to jam the Wi-Fi in home security systems that are connected to alarms and cameras. (Jessica Hill / Associated Press)

BY [NATHAN SOLIS](#), STAFF WRITER, MARCH 6, 2024 5 AM PT

The Los Angeles Police Department wants the public to know that their home security systems may have a weak spot that tech-savvy burglars are starting to exploit.

Most modern home security systems rely on a Wi-Fi signal for burglar alarms and surveillance equipment, including doorbell cameras. A jamming device emits a high-energy signal that is silent to the human ear, but drowns out the Wi-Fi signal to the security system, disconnecting the system from the network.

A group of burglars who used a jamming device broke into a home through a second-story balcony and were able to steal jewelry, purses, money and other items, the Los Angeles Police Department's [Wilshire Division said in a news release](#).

There was no additional information about other instances where burglars used a jamming device, but the LAPD said that these burglars tend to ransack and target bedrooms and have a getaway driver waiting as a lookout. The LAPD did not respond to requests for additional information about the use of jamming devices.

The LAPD recommends several basic steps that residents can take to avoid being an easy target for burglars, which include technological changes and also some common sense.

- Shift from wireless to wired. Anyone who wants to deter Wi-Fi jamming can ask their internet provider or an electrician to hard-wire their burglary alarm system, connecting it to their router via cables. That would eliminate the need for devices to speak to one another over Wi-Fi.
- Put electronic trackers in your valuables. For anyone who owns valuable items that can be easily stolen, the LAPD recommends investing in an Apple Air Tag. The tag can be placed inside an object and later tracked via a smartphone.
- Protect your circuit breakers. Residents can invest in a padlock for their electrical circuit boxes to deter easy access for burglars who want to interfere with the alarm system.
- Make it harder to break in. The LAPD recommends that anyone with a sliding door place a metal bar on the bottom tracks to block it from opening and install motion sensor lighting for when nobody's home.
- Keep your travel plans to yourself. People should limit the number of strangers who know about their vacation plans. That includes ride-sharing drivers. This also includes announcing vacation plans over social media.
- Be vigilant. Residents can keep an eye out for vehicles in their neighborhood that are suspicious with temporary or dealer license plates. The LAPD also recommends that neighbors stay in touch with one another to keep an eye on their properties and share contact information in the event that a surveillance camera might miss something that happens in the area. Neighbors can also pick up mail and make sure that packages don't pile up at the door.

One final tip from the LAPD: Residents should not approach suspected burglars.