

APARTMENT BUILDING SAFETY AUDIT ASSESSMENT



This apartment building safety audit assessment is designed to help residents, tenants and security staff assess the safety and security of their apartment building. It covers potential areas of vulnerability, and provides suggestions for adapting your security to reduce the risk of crime against you and your property.

Complete each question in the apartment building safety audit assessment. If you answer 'no' to any of the questions, review the suggested treatment options in the back of this booklet.

Date	Time
Location of audit	
Name of audit participant	
Suburb	Postcode



NO.	QUESTION	YES	NO	N/A	COMMENTS
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STREET NUMBER

1.	Is the street number of your apartment building visible from the street by day and night?				
2.	Is your apartment/unit number displayed?				

APARTMENT BUILDING ACCESS/SIGNAGE

3.	Does the building have a reception area that is staffed?				
4.	Is suitable access control for tenants to enter the building?				
5.	Is the reception area monitored by security or camera surveillance?				
6.	Is directional signage located at the entry to the complex clearly indicating the location of building names and unit numbers?				

ELEVATORS

7.	Is the lighting level adequate?				
8.	Do you know how to call for assistance in the elevator?				
9.	Are signs displayed to show you where or how to get help in an emergency?				
10.	Is an emergency button in the elevator and is it regularly tested?				

STAIRWELLS

11.	Do you feel safe using the stairs?				
12.	Is the lighting level adequate?				
13.	Would you use the stairs at night?				
14.	Could someone hear if you called for help?				

NO.	QUESTION	YES	NO	N/A	COMMENTS
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CAR PARKS

15.	Is the entrance/exit point to the car park monitored by security or surveillance cameras?				
16.	Is there suitable access control to enter/exit the car park?				
17.	Is it difficult for a potential offender in a vehicle to follow you into the apartment complex?				
18.	Is lighting adequate in the car park?				
19.	Are individual storage areas/garages fitted with lock sets to restrict theft of property?				
20.	Is "Park Smarter" signage displayed to warn motorists to secure their property and cars.				
21.	When swipe cards are lost are they bumped from the system?				

APARTMENT DOORS

22.	Are quality lock sets fitted and in good working order?				
23.	Is a peep hole (door viewer) installed?				
24.	Are keys removed from locks when not in use?				
25.	Is a security/screen door installed?				
26.	Are sliding doors fitted with suitable lock sets?				

WINDOWS

27.	Are windows solidly constructed?				
28.	Are window lock sets fitted?				
29.	Are windows able to be locked in a partially open position?				
30.	Are skylights suitably secured?				



NO.	QUESTION	YES	NO	N/A	COMMENTS
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PROPERTY IDENTIFICATION

31.	Have you recorded details of your household items?				
32.	Is your personal property engraved for easy identification?				
33.	Is your property photographed for easy identification?				
34.	Do you have adequate building and/or content insurance?				

TELEPHONE

35.	Are telephone lines visible from the exterior of your building?				
36.	Are your telephones pre-programmed with emergency contact numbers?				

SAFES

37.	Do you have a safe to securely store valuable items?				
38.	Is the safe securely anchored?				
39.	Are keys to the safe out of view when not in use?				

INTRUDER ALARM SYSTEMS

40.	Is an intruder alarm system installed?				
41.	Is the intruder alarm system monitored?				
42.	Is the intruder alarm system tested on monthly basis?				

BUILDING FIRE MANAGEMENT

43.	Do you know how to get out of the building if there is a fire or other emergency?				
44.	Do you know where your emergency assembly area is located?				
45.	Does the apartment have a smoke detector fitted?				
46.	Is the smoke detector tested on a monthly basis?				
47.	Do you have a fire blanket or fire extinguisher close to your kitchen?				



NO.	QUESTION	YES	NO	N/A	COMMENTS
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BUILDING SECURITY

48.	Are security staff employed to patrol the premises on a regular basis?				
49.	Do you have a body corporate that deals with security and safety issues?				

FENCES AND GATES

50.	Are perimeter fences erected around the property to restrict access?				
51.	Are gates fitted?				
52.	Are fences and gates in good working order?				
53.	If the complex has a secure perimeter do the emergency services have an access card or key?				

BUILDING DESIGN

54.	Does the orientation of the building allow for natural surveillance between the street and the neighbouring properties?				
55.	Are garbage bays locked to restrict unauthorised access?				
56.	Are mailboxes/rooms locked to restrict unauthorised access?				
57.	Are alcoves or recesses monitored by surveillance cameras?				

BALCONY

58.	Has the balcony been designed to avoid hand and foot holds for an offender to scale the outside of the building?				
59.	Does the balcony have a sensor light?				
60.	Are sliding doors and windows on the balcony reinforced with adequate locks to restrict unauthorised access?				

LANDSCAPING

61.	Are trees and bushes well maintained to ensure good visibility along pathways?				
62.	Are there bushes or dark spaces near your apartment block that could be used as potential hiding places?				



SUGGESTED APARTMENT BUILDING SECURITY MEASURES

If you answered no to any of the questions in the apartment building safety audit assessment, we suggest you make some changes. These changes will help reduce the risk to you and your property. If you need advice or assistance contact your local Victoria Police Crime Prevention Officer.

STREET NUMBER

- The street number must be prominently displayed at the front of your apartment building to comply with council local laws pursuant to *Local Government Act 1989*.
- The number should be a minimum height of 120mm and be visible at night.
- The individual apartment/unit number must also be prominently displayed at the front of the unit to comply with the *Local Government Act 1989*.
- The street number could also be painted on the street kerb outside the apartment block to assist emergency services and visitors locate your residence.

APARTMENT BUILDING ACCESS/SIGNAGE

- Limit the number of entry/exit points to restrict unauthorised access.
- Effective directional signage should be considered to guide visitors in locating entry/exit points, fire exits and apartments/units.
- All residents should be aware of possible tailgaters and ensure no person follows them in.
- If entry is gained by a swipe card system, doors should take a minimum time for closure to prevent a potential offender from gaining entry to the building.
- Surveillance cameras should be installed in and around the property to maximise surveillance opportunities and increase the physical security of the building. Digital or video technology should be used to record images and stored in a secure area to avoid tampering.
- A staffed reception area is an appropriate initial contact point for visitors.

ELEVATORS

- Look to see who is in the elevator before entering. If you feel uncomfortable about entering the elevator, wait for the next lift.
- When in the elevator stand near the control panel so the emergency button can be activated if necessary.
- Emergency contact numbers should be clearly displayed in the elevator.

STAIRWELLS

- Look to see who is in the stairwell before entering. If you feel uncomfortable about entering the stairwell, wait until the person leaves.
- The stairwell should be well lit and designed to ensure there are no entrapment zones or areas where a potential offender could hide.

CAR PARKS

- Access to the car park area should be restricted by roller, tilt or panel lift doors to restrict unauthorised access. These doors should be controlled by access control equipment such as a key, code or card operated electronic lock set. When a key card or remote is lost it should be bumped from the system to ensure they cannot be used by potential offenders. There should be minimal time for closure of the doors after entry is gained to restrict the opportunity for tailgaters gaining access to the building.
- The configuration of parking bays can impact sightlines. Grid rows increase surveillance while offset sections can reduce vision to one or two rows.



- Bollards or barriers can be installed at the entry and exit points of the apartment building to reduce the opportunity for ram-raid attacks.
- Property stored within garages or storage areas should be secured with a suitable lock set to reduce the opportunity for theft.
- The car park should be well lit as per the Australian Lighting Standards.
- Park Smarter signage should be used to educate people not to leave valuable items visible in their cars. These signs can be obtained from the Victoria Police Crime Prevention Officer for Region One.
- The walls and ceilings in the car park should be painted a light colour to increase reflectivity within the car park.
- Camera surveillance systems should be installed to monitor high risk areas.

DOORS

- External doors and frames should be of solid construction.
- These doors should be fitted with quality deadlock sets which comply with the Australia and New Zealand Standards and Fire Regulations (Australian Building Code) to enable occupants to escape in emergency situations such as fires.
- Consider having a peephole (door viewer) installed in the door to monitor people at the door.
- Locks should be checked and maintained on a regular basis to ensure they are in good working order.
- Keys should be removed from locks when not in use to prevent thieves entering or leaving your apartment/unit.
- Security/screen doors can be installed to provide additional protection.
- Security/screen doors should be designed and installed to the Australian Standards.
- Consideration should be given to the installation of patio bolts on sliding doors.
- Under-house access point should be secured with an appropriate lock set.

WINDOWS

- External windows and frames should be of solid construction.
- Window frames should be anchored to the building to prevent easy removal.
- It is recommended that all windows should be fitted with quality key-operated lock sets and kept locked when not in use (further information on lock sets can be obtained from Standards Australia, phone 1300 654 646).
- Thieves may break glass to unlock windows. Don't leave keys in the locks.
- Some styles of windows can be locked in a partially open position. Further advice on this item can be obtained from your insurance company or a locksmith.
- If you have a skylight in your apartment/unit, keep them suitably secured.
- Glass within doors and windows may also be reinforced to restrict unauthorised access via these areas.
- The existing glass may be replaced with laminated glass to reduce attacks and restrict access.
- Metal security grilles or shutters may be installed to restrict access and reduce attacks.
(Note: caution should be used if you are installing metal security grilles or screens so as not to trap occupants in an emergency such as a fire).



PROPERTY IDENTIFICATION

- Record descriptions/model/serial numbers of property for easy identification.
- Back up property lists from computer in case the computer is lost or stolen.
- Engrave or etch your property with a traceable number, eg. V – for Victoria and your drivers licence number for identification.
- When you sell your property, place a neat line through your engraving to show that it is no longer valid.
- It is also a good idea to give the person a receipt to prove the sale of the item.
- Take a photograph and record the details of unique items to aid in their recovery if lost or stolen.
- Ensure you have adequate building and content insurance for the replacement of property.

TELEPHONES

- Pre-program the speed dial function on your phone with the emergency number 000.
- Place a sticker on your telephone with the emergency number and local police number.

SAFES

- For added security for valuables such as jewellery, cash and documents, consider installing a safe.
- The safe should be well concealed, fixed to the floor or embedded in foundations.
- The safe should be locked at all times. The key to the safe should be stored out of sight in a separate room.
- The safe should be manufactured and installed to the Australian and New Zealand Standards.

INTRUDER ALARM SYSTEMS

- An intruder alarm system can be used to enhance the physical security of your apartment/unit.
- Research has shown that monitored intruder alarm systems are more effective as they alert your security company of intrusions.
- The intruder alarm system should be manufactured and installed to the Australian and New Zealand Standards for Domestic Applications.
- The system should be designed to provide maximum coverage of the apartment/unit and garage.
- Remember to regularly check the battery and test the system.

BUILDING FIRE MANAGEMENT AND SECURITY

- All apartments should have an evacuation plan in case of a fire.
- A smoke alarm should be installed in all apartments and checked on a monthly basis.
- All apartments should have a fire extinguisher or fire blanket in the kitchen which can be utilised in the case of a fire.
- All fire exits, emergency evacuation procedures and assembly areas should be clearly displayed.
- Details of a contact person for the body corporate should be clearly listed on the front of the building.
- If the area is monitored or patrolled by security there should be effective signage suggesting the type of security measure installed or put in place.



FENCES AND GATES

- Fences can be used to define the property boundaries and restrict access to the property.
- Fences and gates should be constructed to reflect the individual's needs and requirements.
- Front fences should be of solid construction, well maintained and allow natural surveillance from the outside and inside of the property.
- Consider the use of self-closing gates and lock sets.
- Fences and gates should be regularly maintained to maximise their effectiveness and ensure they are in good working order.

BUILDING DESIGN

- Clear sightlines should be maintained between the street, neighbouring properties and buildings.
- All mail boxes should be fitted with a suitable lock to restrict access to mail. If there is a common mailroom there should be restricted access by swipe card or similar.
- Potential areas for crime such as recesses should be monitored by camera surveillance.
- Wheelie bins or other items should be locked away so they cannot be used as a climbing aid. Ensure that all garbage bins are secured and any garbage bays are kept locked to reduce the risk of unauthorised entry.
- Ensure all graffiti is removed within 24 hours.

BALCONIES

- Balconies can often be used by intruders as natural ladders, scaling the building to access units. The balcony needs to be designed to reduce the opportunities for scaling by having railings designed that do not act as a hand grip.
- Consideration should be given to having sensor lighting installed on the balcony to automatically activate lighting when movement is detected.
- Sliding doors and windows from balconies also need to be reinforced to restrict unauthorised access via these areas.

LANDSCAPING

- Trees and shrubs should be trimmed to reduce hiding places and increase visibility to and from the street.
- Overhanging tree branches should be trimmed to prevent people using them to access other parts of the property, eg. using a tree to get to an upper level.

CONCLUSION

Victoria Police and the City of Melbourne care about your safety and hope that by considering your suggestions, criminal activity might be reduced and the safety of the public and property enhanced. However, there is no guarantee that all recommendations will be actioned or that the area assessed will experience a reduction in crime.

