



TECH LINK

What to Consider When Purchasing a Home Security System

With increasing availability and affordability of wireless security systems and doorbell cameras, you may be thinking about beefing up your home's security measures. How do you know what type of system or products would be best for your home? Consider these factors before making your purchase:

Burglar Alarm or Home Security System

Burglar alarms and home security systems serve different purposes. Burglar alarms have sensors on doors and windows that will alert you or the police that someone has entered your home. A home security system typically provides additional benefits, such as alerting you to fire, a high level of carbon monoxide and flooding.

Wireless vs. Hard-Wired System

With a wireless home security system, there are no wires to run other than the electrical cord on the control interface. Hardwired systems usually require you or the installer to do a lot of drilling in walls to run cable and connect everything to your home's circuit breaker box. With a wireless system, you will need to consider your internet bandwidth. If installing a camera or sensor on the outside of your home, your wireless connection will have to extend to your porch (and go through the exterior barrier of your home—brick, stone, siding). You may need a Wi-Fi booster or mesh unit to reach the exterior of your home with a quality signal.

Battery Backup Option

Most systems will continue to operate even when your home loses power. A traditional electric home security system is usually low voltage, so it doesn't take a lot of power to run the system. And most systems also contain a battery backup or battery backup can be added.

Size of System

There's no one-size-fits-all when it comes to a home security system. A small DIY system may be great for an apartment, condo or small home. However, if you're looking to secure a larger home, you'll need a system that can handle a larger amount of information and monitoring. The larger system might include multiple cameras with recording and a monitoring service.

Live Video vs. Recorded Video

If you are considering installing surveillance cameras, you will need to understand the difference between live video and recorded video. Do you want to be able to watch a live feed of what's going on in and around your home while you're away? Or would you rather be able to just watch a recording? IP (internet protocol) cameras offer a live view, while a system with a DVR allows you to save and watch recordings at a later time.



Possibility of Home Insurance Discount

Check with your homeowner's insurance, you may be eligible for a discount on home insurance premiums for having a home security system with a monitoring service.

Consider Other Measures to Secure Your Home

In addition to installing security cameras or systems, there are other steps to keep your home and property secure:

- Install motion-sensing lighting on the exterior of your home
- Connect your light fixtures or lamps to timers or smartphone apps that can turn them on when you're away
- Make sure all windows and doors are locked; consider installing deadbolt locks
- Don't mention travel on social media until you return

