

How I Spent My Summer Vacation...

Make it a Happy Ending with Some Simple Safety Tips

Know how to safeguard your family and your home while traveling

Summer is officially underway and if you're planning on traveling in the next few weeks, you'll have a lot of company. The Department of Transportation's Bureau of Statistics reports that in recent years, Americans have taken around 650 million long distance summer trips between Memorial Day and Labor Day weekends. And the average summer long-distance trip is 284 miles one-way.

With all that time away from your home, vacationers may be opening the door to potential thieves who look for telltale signs indicating no one is around. Those looking to take advantage of unsuspecting travelers might also target you and your family while on vacation. "You can help make family trips more enjoyable by taking a few simple steps to reduce the possibility you'll become an easy target for thieves preying on tourists or your empty home," says Insurance agent Eric Nier.

To ensure a safe summer vacation for you and your family, Eric Nier Insurance recommends the following tips:

Make sure your home is protected while you're away:

- 🎬 Stop mail and newspapers, or ask a neighbor to pick them up every day.
- 🎬 Put several household lights on timers so they turn on and off at appropriate times.
- 🎬 Arrange to have grass mowed while you're gone.
- 🎬 Ask a neighbor to park in your driveway overnight - anything that might suggest someone's home.

Make sure you don't pack unnecessary items and that your valuables are protected:

- 🎬 Clean out your wallet or purse before you go; take only essential credit cards.
- 🎬 Carry your purse close to your body, or wallet in an inside front pocket. Better yet, take a "fanny pack" or wear a money pouch under your clothes.

Try to blend in with the crowd and not look too many like tourists:

- 🎬 Don't display expensive jewelry, cameras, bags, and other items that might draw attention.
- 🎬 Check maps before you go out so you can tour confidently.
- 🎬 Stick to well-lighted, well-traveled streets at all times.
- 🎬 Leave an itinerary of your trip with someone at home in case you need to be contacted. Carry an extra passport photo with you just in case you need to replace a stolen passport

Don't use your home address on your luggage tags. You don't need to let anyone know where your empty house is located. Consider using your business card instead.