

# Security Bar Safety

People are afraid of crime near their homes. To feel safe, many people install security bars on their doors and windows. Some security bars, also called burglar bars, can trap you in a fire. They can also keep firefighters from getting in to rescue you.

## Tips for Home Escape

- Have working smoke alarms in each bedroom. You also need one outside each sleeping area. Install alarms on every level of the home. Mount alarms in the basement.
- Test all smoke alarms once a month. Press the test button to be sure the alarms are working.
- Draw a map of your home. Show all doors and windows. Find at least two ways out of every room.
- Choose an outside meeting place. It should be a safe distance from the home. It should be visible from the street.
- Talk about the plan with everyone in your home. Have a fire drill in your home twice a year.
- Make sure all exits can be opened easily from the inside. This includes barred doors and windows.
- Choose security bars that have quick-release devices. Make sure everyone in the home can open them.

## Quick-release security bars

In some areas, laws have been passed about security bars. In many places, codes and laws require the security bars have a quick-release device. NFPA Life Safety Code states that all ways out must be opened easily from inside. Tools, keys, or special effort should not be needed to escape.

- Ask your fire department or housing official about the laws in your area.
- Ask community leaders to get funds to update the security bars. This will help more people have quick-release bars.
- Ask the fire department for a presentation on security bars and home escape.

**FACT**  
A window guard or gate or a window stop or wedge, can keep a child from falling out of an open window.

**Make sure security bars have quick-release devices:**



Pull down on lever. Push open bars.



Push in on button. Push open bars.



Step down on pedal. Push open bars.



Kick in lever. Push open bars.

Types of quick-release devices.



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