



Words Giles Griffin

# JAILHOUSE ROCK

**Whether South Africans are more, or less safe in their homes might have less to do with conflicting crime statistics than with attitude. We explore the products designed to keep your abode a bit more secure.**

**A**ward-winning writer Jonny Steinberg's latest book, *Thin Blue: Unwritten Rules of Policing*, paints a picture of the current effectiveness (or otherwise) of the South African police. Well worth a read in its entirety, the statistics it quotes are sobering. Here's just one: in the 1995-6 financial year, the police reported just over 77 000 armed robberies per annum. In 2006-7, the figure stood at a little over 126 000, or 60 per cent higher. (However, other figures from the All Media Products Survey, or AMPS, show that 6,9 per cent of South African adults have been the victim of violent crime in the past 12 months, down from 8,1 per cent in the previous year. For nonviolent crime, the figures are 11,4 per cent versus 15,2 per cent respectively.)

According to security-barrier manufacturer Trellidor, peak times for robberies are between 6pm and 6am, and home invasions (violent break-ins when people are at home) are running at 40 per day in South Africa.

Security expert Simon Neat of Suburban Security says that 95 per cent of all residential crime is opportunistic – food for thought, that – and argues that first-line prevention is very much worthwhile.

But we all know that statistics are one thing – how we feel (and particularly what makes us feel safe) is quite another.

In this regard, the multilayered approach to home security has become entrenched. For better or for worse, we continue to feel the need to barricade our families and ourselves into homes that are like fortresses. And the security companies continue to innovate to offer products that help us to do that.

Preventing intruders entering to begin with is the first step. That means perimeter electric fencing and-or spikes on high walls, CCTV (even fake cameras can be a deterrent), burglar bars on your windows and doors, burglar shutters, strong locks, bolts and door

frames, beams to trigger lights and alarms before intruders get in – and dogs.

Detecting intruders if they do get in is the next, albeit far less desirable, step. That means magnetic breaker switches on doors and movement sensors, AKA passives or passive infrared units (PIRs) in rooms. Having someone come along to help is usually a simultaneous step once any alarm is triggered: cue armed response and-or the police.

There's a new lock box available from safety firm ADT that allows you to safely leave an access key or remote so reaction officers can gain access and check your property properly.

ADT only uses stranded cable with sealed PVC isolation for all its alarm installations. Translation? Better protection against corrosion and oxidation, both of which make the wires connect better for longer. Sage note from security firm, Chubb: 'An alarm without a response is just a noise – ensure your alarm is monitored.'

**i CAMERAS THAT SEE 400M IN THE DARK** If you live on a golf estate or eco-estate in Gauteng, you might be lucky enough to be protected by an intelligent video surveillance system installed by C3 Shared Services. Not only can their sophisticated military-standard thermal cameras see in the dark (when most burglaries occur), but they can also clearly distinguish between a cat, a tree and a genuine intruder. And not just at a distance of 400 metres, but also before the intruders scale the perimeter fence and set off the alarm. Fewer false alarms, more attention paid to the real thing, better security all round. Albeit at a price.



**i WHAT PRICE A SECURE HOME?**

A small upper-level apartment could cost as little as R2 000 to fit with an alarm. Barrier security depends on how many doors and windows you have, and it is not cheap at all if you're starting from scratch. Bespoke metal artworks cost even more – about R2 000 a square metre.

If you want that as well as a top-end video entry phone (R5 500), a decent CCTV and alarm (both about R5 500), a couple of outside beams (R3 000) and electric fencing along a 30 metre wall (R4 300), you won't get much change out of R50 000.

And don't forget the cost of remote monitoring (about R400 per month).

Still, compare that to the cost of a full-time security guard at R7 000 per month and it might seem more reasonable.

**i SOBERING READING** *Thin Blue: Unwritten Rules of Policing*, by Jonny Steinberg. Jonathan Ball, Cape Town, 2008.

**i A HOT NEW PIR** A passive infrared unit (PIR) is that thing in the corner of the room that flashes at you. Now it can stop you in your tracks as well. Certain passives can be fitted to emit pepper spray when they're set off. The shock factor must be significant but the inconvenience of false alarms could be considerable. And spraying intruders doesn't come cheap: R2 500 per unit, though they are cheap to recharge.



**FAR LEFT AND ABOVE** Shutterguards from Taylor Window Blinds can withstand serious assault (by a two-kilo hammer), but are considerably more attractive than security doors – and have all the shade and ventilation control benefits of conventional shutters. **NEAR LEFT** Security needn't be dull – why not paint it orange, or any colour you like? **MIDDLE LEFT** The very latest espionage-grade technology is now protecting security estates in Gauteng – this camera can spot an intruder at 400 metres in the dark (the figure outlined in orange).

Securing your most valuable assets and, let's be blunt, if you're at home, your own survival, is the last and most important line of defence – here we're talking safes, panic buttons, internal safety doors and 'safe areas'. But what, in amongst all these security layers, is new? CCTV – and in particular, remote controlled CCTV – may not be entirely new, but it is becoming more accessible to the residential market: about R5 500 for two high-definition cameras and a quality digital video recorder (DVR) to record activity on your premises. (Both the cameras and the recordings will stand up in court as evidence, whereas cheaper, low-quality cameras and DVRs won't.) This means that what was once the preserve of businesses and central business districts can now be linked up to your very own PC or laptop via ADSL, as well as to the armed response centre.

CCTV can even talk to your cellphone if it's on 3G, all the while monitoring what is going on in your own back yard. (These wireless

systems can also signal to your cellphone where there is smoke or higher temperatures in your home, and therefore warns you if there may be fire as well.)

Simon says security choices have changed. 'People have added on another layer of security apart from alarms and burglar bars. Now they're buying CCTV and electric fencing, as well as more sophisticated alarm systems. They're also upgrading to better entry phone systems, increasingly choosing video-based ones.'

Interestingly, the cost of electric fencing appears to be coming down – for the fencing itself at least – as, presumably, demand rises (it's good to know something is getting cheaper). At about R60 per running metre installed, it is a very good first-line deterrent and costs about R40 a month more on your electricity bill. The control unit, though, comes in at R2 500 fitted.

Outside beams remain popular, but are neither cheap (about R1 500 each) nor foolproof. To be

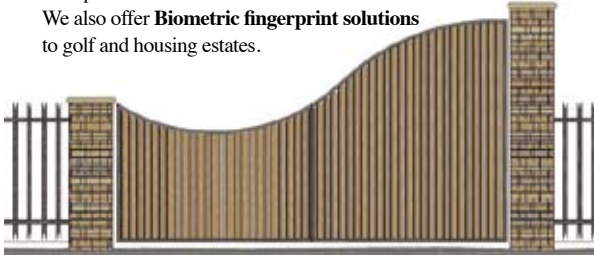
# Fingerprint security

– all you need

## Residential products

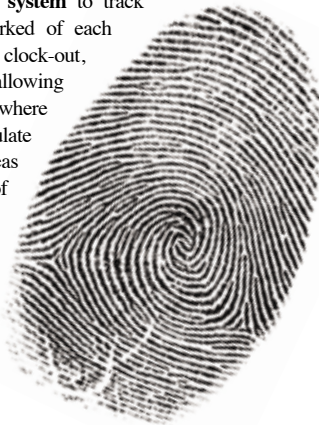
The majority of break-ins and hold-ups are a result of intruders following victims into their homes. Protect yourself and your family from harm by installing **Speed Gate** by Quik Securities. **Speed Gate** is an anti-tailgating device that takes just 4 seconds to open or close. Combined with our **Biometric fingerprint access technology**, **Speed Gate** provides the surest way of keeping your family safe from intruders. A commercial version of this product is also available. We offer our clients the opportunity to sit down with our commercial product designers to customize their purchase to suit their needs and tastes.

We also offer **Biometric fingerprint solutions** to golf and housing estates.



## Commercial products

Time attendance is crucial for determining employees' remuneration, but conventional systems can be cheated and may lead to disputes. Our **Biometric technology** uses a **unique fingerprint system** to track and calculate the time worked of each employee from clock-in to clock-out, simplifying payment and allowing fast dispute resolutions where necessary. You can also regulate access to restricted areas by using an assortment of **Biometric locks, turnstiles and boom gates** from Quik Securities.



- **Factory Time Attendance Systems from R1 599.**
- **Office Time Attendance Systems from only R1 100.**
- **Biometric Access Control Systems for Office and Factory from R1 800.**

(All commercial products come with a two-year guarantee.)

## Hotel products

Our brand new **Biometric door handle technology** makes access to hotel rooms simple, secure and stylish, and is essential for any hotel. A professional sales executive is on stand-by to visit you to demonstrate our product and explain how it can transform your hotel! Our **Biometric door handles** also well-suited to private homes for use in areas such as pantries and storerooms.

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## [ADVICE]



### ⓘ BREAK IN BEFORE YOU BUY

Trellidor offers a rather sensible but little known service to buyers of new properties – a free review of the security levels on the property you're considering, with suggestions as to what would be needed – practically and financially – to bring it up to scratch. Useful for setting the offer, let alone for long-term peace of mind.

### ⓘ CURVES AND COLOURS

Trellidor can now be fitted on a curve, subject to certain limits. And time was that burglar doors were white or, white. Trellidor now come in three standard colours – white, sand and matt bronze – as well as three non-standard colours: light brown, matt aluminium and matt black (no extra cost, they just take a bit longer to arrive).

If you're prepared to wait a while longer (about three weeks) and pay a bit more, you can have them in whatever colour you wish, to special order. Anyone for a pink trellidor?

### 📞 WITH THANKS TO

**ADT Security**, [www.adt.co.za](http://www.adt.co.za)  
**C3 Shared Services**, [www.c3ss.com](http://www.c3ss.com)  
**Chubb Security**, [www.chubb.co.za](http://www.chubb.co.za)  
**Dylan Trull**, artist and metalworker, +27 (0)21 780 1422  
**Suburban Security**, *Simon Neat*, +27 (0)21 557 6766  
**Taylor's Window Blinds**, +27 (0)860 585 885  
[www.taylorblinds.co.za](http://www.taylorblinds.co.za)  
**Trellidor**, [www.trellidor.co.za](http://www.trellidor.co.za)



more precise, they are not cat-proof or peacock-proof. Dogs leap less, apparently, so somehow fail to set the beams off, but if you want to avoid large leaping felines setting your alarm off, you should try to get shorter-range beams that only cover a smaller area – only the doors or windows you want to protect rather than beaming sensitive waves across your back yard, for instance.

Burglar bars and doors have, however, more to offer than you might think. Trellidor offers a range of refinements to their 'sliding security barriers' that, of course, we all call 'trellidors'. You can have them fitted so they provide easy access for wheelchairs (sunken or hinge-up tracks, the latter at an additional R250 for a single door).

And now you can have the very toughest security in your home: their flagship Trellidor Trojan, certified internationally as the strongest sliding security barrier on the global market, has recently been modified for domestic use. Designed to protect your Crown Jewels, it's the best you can get – albeit at a 45 per cent premium over the standard Trellidor A300. Trellidor is also the only company to give an unconditional guarantee against corrosion for three years, even in humid coastal areas, and five years inland.

Finally, you can get your Trellidor in more than one colour, and now they can even go round corners (see box). Of course the best costs more than its many imitators, but what price your family's safety?

As Charlene Botha of Trellidor says: 'We believe that barrier security has a role to play in keeping people safe at home, as long as those barriers are designed to do their job properly and homeowners are disciplined about using them.'

As ever, security technology only goes so far. Vigilance and the human factor are equally critical to keeping yourself successfully out of harm's way.

So keep your doors locked, your windows barred, your alarms on and your eyes open. And trust to God and your security company. 🙏

**TOP** Burglar bars can be beautiful – this Dylan Trull design reflects the surrounding bulrushes of Flamingo Vlei, Tableview. **BOTTOM LEFT** Trellidors now go round the corner and up the stairs. **BOTTOM RIGHT** The Lock Box, a recent innovation from ADT, is especially useful for holiday homes and those who travel a lot (note that its combination can be changed as many times as you want).

