

How to Choose a Deadbolt Lock for Your Home

By Jimmie Newell

What is the real job that the locks on your doors are expected to perform? There is an old saying in the security industry that "locks only keep honest people honest", let's face reality; if someone really wants into your home, they will get in.

The real job of the locks on your doors is defeat the attacks of the opportunist, or amateur thief, to make it tough enough that they will bypass you and go to an easier target. Lock manufacturers produce locks that are designed to resist varying types of attempts to defeat them, these range from hitting them with a hammer to picking the lock. As soon as a new type of attack is introduced they will come up with a way to defend against it. The result is that there are a wide variety of deadbolt locks on the market, that offer varying degrees of protection, knowing which features to look for will make a huge difference in the ability of your lock to "keep honest people honest".

Locks manufactured in the US are graded by their ability to withstand attack by the American National Standards Institute, or ANSI. They are generally graded from grade 3 to grade 1, with grade 3 being the least secure. Many locks are imported from other countries some are not graded at all, others are built to the specifications of the various grades, however not actually tested. If this is confusing to you ask your professional locksmith for a recommendation.

Minimum features to look for include:

- * A 1 inch bolt throw
- * A solid metal tapered outside housing
- * A reinforced strike plate that is fastened with long enough screws to attach to the underlying support framing.
- * A pin tumbler locking mechanism
- * The bolt should be solid and contain a hardened roll pin to resist sawing.

There are deadbolt locks on the market that far exceed these minimum requirements. For information about high security deadbolts, key control deadbolts, and other high end or special use deadbolt locks, contact your professional locksmith.

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