



Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

5 Basic CPTED Principles

There are 5 basic principles that guide CPTED:

1. **Natural Surveillance:** Natural surveillance guides the placement of physical features such as windows, lighting and landscaping. These features affect how much can be seen by occupants and passersby. Potential criminals are unlikely to attempt a crime if they are at risk of being observed. Similarly, we are likely to feel safer when we can **see and be seen**.
2. **Natural Access Control:** Natural access control guides how people enter and leave a space through the placement of entrances, exits, fences, landscaping and lighting. It can decrease opportunities for criminal activity by denying criminals access to potential targets and creating a perception of risk for would-be offenders.
3. **Territorial Reinforcement:** Physical design can create an area of territorial influence that can be perceived by and may deter potential offenders. Examples include defined property lines and clear distinctions between private and public spaces. Territorial reinforcement can be created using landscaping, pavement designs, gateway treatments, signs and fences.
4. **Maintenance:** A well maintained home, building or community park creates a sense of guardianship and helps deter criminals.
5. **Activity Support:** Criminal acts can be discouraged in public spaces when we encourage activities in those spaces by residents, visitors and other legitimate users.

Quick Tips

While ideally all 5 principles should be considered when evaluating a property, there are 3 quick steps one can take to increase the security of their property.

These are known as the 3 "L's" of crime prevention; Locks, Lighting, and Landscaping. All of which are interrelated, and all of which are easy to replicate anywhere:

1. **Locks:** Be sure you have proper locks on all your doors and windows. And keep them locked! Use anti-bumping deadbolt locks on all your doors. Keep the door between your house and the garage locked and lock your garage door at night. Don't forget to check all your locks before you go to bed each night.
2. **Lighting:** Criminals love landscape lighting and dusk-to-dawn lighting. We recommend you install motion detector lighting on all your outside lights. This includes on all four sides of your home. Also install timers for the interior lights of your house. This makes your home look occupied even when you are not there.
3. **Landscaping:** In addition to keeping your lawn cut and clear of clutter, remember the 3 Foot/7 Foot Rule. All of your bushes should be cut down to no higher than three feet and thinned out. This prevents criminals from hiding behind your bushes to surprise you. All your trees should be cut to hang no lower than seven feet from the ground. To avoid being a climbing aid, tree trunks should be no closer than ten feet from structures and branches should be no closer than six feet. For example, CPTED recommends the planting of prickly vegetation below certain external windows.

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Email Officer A. Hartman if you would like a free CPTED assessment done on your home. CPTED assessments (interior & exterior) can be conducted for free at businesses and other organizations.