

WARM UP

- 1 Read the title. What do you know about alarms? Why do you think people install them? Does your home have one? How many types of alarms do you know?

GLOSSARY

- belongings: *effetti personali*
- burglar alarms: *antifurti*
- alerting device: *dispositivo di allarme*
- theft: *furto*
- to warn: *avvertire*
- to detect: *individuare*
- underway: *in corso*

Alarm systems

Has anyone ever tried to break into your house? Well if the answer is yes, then you will be well aware of what a traumatic experience it can be, not only for the possessions which have been stolen, but also due to the very fact that someone has touched all your personal belongings. That's why more and more people nowadays are installing burglar alarms in their homes to detect unauthorised intruders.

The most basic alarm consists of one or more sensors to detect intruders and an alerting device. These security alarms are not only used in homes but they are also used in commercial, industrial and military buildings to protect them against theft and property damage. A typical premises security alarm has a panel which reads sensor inputs, which signal intrusions and whether arms are present. These sensors are often placed on doors and windows. Some systems also have an alerting device in the form of bells, sirens or flashing lights, which serve both to warn occupants of intrusion and to try and scare off burglars. We can also find other kinds of alarms on the market like car alarms which obviously protect vehicles and their contents. These alarm systems are aimed at keeping intruders out, whereas prison alarm systems are installed to detect if any inmates try to escape. Some alarm systems combine both fire and intrusion protection and can range from simple systems to systems with closed-circuit television surveillance which automatically records the intruders in action, as well as control systems on electrically locked doors. These more complicated multi-area systems, used more often on industrial and commercial property, are monitored and controlled by computer. The security system itself is sometimes connected to a monitoring service whose job is to alert the property owner or notify police if they receive the signal that an intrusion is underway.

ACTIVITIES

READING COMPREHENSION

- 2 Read the text and answer the following questions.

- 1 Where are security alarms installed and why?
- 2 Where can sensors be placed and what is their purpose?
- 3 What does an alerting device consist of and what is its purpose?
- 4 Why do some industries also make use of a monitoring service?

VOCABULARY

- 3 Match the following words or expressions from the text with their synonyms.

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| 1 break into | a <input type="checkbox"/> weapons |
| 2 be aware of | b <input type="checkbox"/> prisoner |
| 3 locked | c <input type="checkbox"/> burgle, enter without permission |
| 4 alert | d <input type="checkbox"/> understand, realise |
| 5 arms | e <input type="checkbox"/> shut and secured with a key |
| 6 inmate | f <input type="checkbox"/> inform, warn |

LISTENING

- 4  7 Listen to an expert talking about how we should protect ourselves in our homes and complete the text with the missing words.

While it is the job of your employer to ensure your (1) _____ at work, once at home, it is your own responsibility to provide a (2) _____ environment. There are many apparently normal situations which may quickly become (3) _____ without warning. Elderly people especially, are always being warned of the risk of allowing (4) _____ into their homes. These may be people who seem friendly enough, and who (5) _____ to be travelling salesmen, plumbers or even policemen, when in fact, they are criminals. Worse still, sometimes a familiar figure like a (6) _____, relative or friend can suddenly become threatening, and you find yourself (7) _____ within the four walls of your own house. In these cases, you need a home security company which provides a manual (8) _____ alarm button, which is easily accessible from a remote key chain or a central keypad. You can programme this device to notify police or other (9) _____ services like doctors, and it is activated instantaneously and quietly. Therefore, a manual panic alarm is not only useful in situations associated with crime, but also in case of sudden health problems, (10) _____ or other life-threatening situations.