



## Buyer's Guide: Internal Security

Buyer's guide for the UK focused on external security, including both physical and electronic components. This version includes a summary and a list of key questions to ask before buying.

### WHY EXTERNAL SECURITY MATTERS

External security is your first line of defence — it's what stops, slows, or deters intruders before they gain access to your property. Effective systems protect not just physical assets but people, privacy, and peace of mind.

In the UK, where burglary and property crime continue to pose risks (especially in urban or high-value areas), a layered external security approach is increasingly necessary.

### PART 1: PHYSICAL SECURITY OPTIONS

#### 1. Fencing & Gates

- Types: Steel palisade, timber fencing, mesh panels, automated gates.
- Look for: Anti-climb design, tamper-proof hinges, height >1.8m.
- Pros: Strong visual & physical barrier.
- Cons: Planning permission may be required (e.g. over 2m); expensive to install.

#### 2. Doors & Locks

- Standards: Look for BS3621 or Sold Secure approval.
- Extras: Anti-snap euro cylinder locks, deadbolts, hinge bolts.
- Pros: Strengthens key entry points.



- Cons: Can be costly for high-grade doors.

### 3. Windows & Glazing

- Features: Laminated glass, security film, locking handles.
- Bars/Shutters: Can deter entry but may not be aesthetically suitable in all areas.
- Pros: Slows or prevents forced entry.
- Cons: May affect fire escape access or visibility.

### 4. Lighting

- Types: Motion sensor floodlights, dusk-to-dawn lighting.
- Standards: IP65 rated for outdoor use.
- Pros: Deters intruders, improves visibility for CCTV.
- Cons: Can be affected by weather, false triggers.

### 5. Signage

- Examples: "CCTV in operation", "Alarm monitored".
- Pros: Cheap, effective deterrent.
- Cons: Not a standalone solution.

## PART 2: ELECTRONIC SECURITY OPTIONS

### 1. CCTV Systems

- Features to look for:
  - HD resolution (1080p+)
  - Night vision



- Motion detection
- Weatherproof (IP65/IP66)
- Remote access via app
- Storage: Local (NVR/DVR) or cloud.
- Pros: Evidence collection, remote monitoring, deterrence.
- Cons: Must comply with UK data protection laws (e.g. GDPR, CCTV signage).

## 2. Intruder Alarms

- Types: Bells-only, dial-out (to your phone), or monitored (via ARC).
- Sensors: Door contacts, PIR motion detectors, glass-break detectors.
- Pros: Immediate alerting.
- Cons: Risk of false alarms; monitoring subscriptions add cost.

## 3. Smart Security Devices

- Includes: Video doorbells, smart floodlights, smart locks.
- Connectivity: WiFi, Zigbee, Z-Wave.
- Pros: Easy to install, mobile control, integrate with other systems.
- Cons: Dependent on internet; some lack backup power.

## 4. Access Control

- Types: Keypads, fobs, biometric, intercoms.
- Best for: Gates, multi-tenant or business premises.



- Pros: Restricts access, adds auditability.
- Cons: May require professional install; sensitive to weather.

## 5. Perimeter Security Systems available

- Electric fencing systems
- Infrared beam barriers
- Microwave barriers
- Fence vibration sensors
- Ground radar or buried cable sensors
- Motion detection lighting systems

## TYPICAL COSTS (2025 ESTIMATES)

Security Feature	Budget Range	Notes
Fencing (per metre)	£40 - £120	Higher for steel or electric gates
Security doors	£500 - £1,500	Depending on material and certification
CCTV systems (4 cameras)	£300 - £1,200+	Excluding installation or cloud fees
Burglar alarm system	£150 - £1,500+	Varies with monitoring and wireless options
Smart doorbell camera	£90 - £300	Subscription may be required
Lighting (per unit)	£30 - £150	Motion floodlights with PIR recommended



## LEGAL REQUIREMENTS (UK)

- CCTV Use:
  - Must have clear signage.
  - You are responsible for footage under UK GDPR.
- Smart devices:
  - Must comply with the PSTI Act 2022 (no default passwords, update transparency).
- Planning permission:
  - May be required for tall fences, gates, or certain external structures.
- Alarm systems:
  - Must follow EN 50131 standards if used in insurance-rated installations.

## KEY QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE BUYING

### Property-Specific Questions:

- What are the vulnerable access points (side gates, rear windows, garage)?
- Are there planning or heritage restrictions?
- Will security upgrades affect property aesthetics or value?

### Installation & Integration:

- Can I DIY this or do I need a professional installer?
- Will the system integrate with my current tech (e.g., Alexa, smartphone)?
- Is there a backup if the power or internet fails?



### Privacy & Legal:

- Does my CCTV point beyond my boundary (e.g., street or neighbour)?
- Have I considered data protection laws?
- Does the product comply with UK security legislation?

### Cost & Maintenance:

- What's the total cost (installation + recurring)?
- Are there subscription or monitoring fees?
- How long is the warranty? Are spare parts available?

## SUMMARY: HOW TO CHOOSE WISELY

Step	What to Do
1. Assess Risk	Understand what threats you're most likely to face (burglary, vandalism, etc.)
2. Use Layers	Combine physical security (doors, gates) with electronic detection (CCTV, alarms)
3. Check Compliance	Ensure systems meet UK legal and insurance requirements
4. Budget for Long Term	Include subscriptions, maintenance, and replacements in your budget
5. Prioritise Visibility	Make sure deterrents (lighting, signage, cameras) are visible and effective
6. Use Accredited Installers	Especially for monitored alarms and professional CCTV systems (NSI or SSAIB certified)



## Final Tip:

Don't rely on a single solution. A locked gate is helpful but becomes much more powerful when combined with motion lights and a camera. Likewise, a camera is only useful if the footage is stored properly and complies with UK laws.