



When you close the door on the room, you should make sure you're completely safe. Lock the knob on the inside of the door, and push the deadbolt or chain across to latch it securely.

Before unpacking, go around and check the windows and doors leading to a balcony and adjoining rooms. Be certain they're securely closed and latched. Do it every time you leave or re-enter your room. Electronic safety devices are becoming more and more effective. For example, use a portable movement-sensor alarm device to hang on the inside doorknob for added protection. The alarm will alert you if anyone touches the outside door knob.

If there's a room safe, use it to store credit cards, cash and jewelry. While you're out, don't leave wallets, purses, travelers' checks, credit cards or jewelry on the bed, table or in other exposed areas. When cleaning, housekeeping staff often leave the room's door open while they work.

Use your cell phone or laptop computer to keep in constant communication with travel companions in other rooms in the hotel. Call each other before going to bed and when getting up in the morning.

That should be enough, but is it? You could make your room safer by taking some extra steps. First, before you apply any gadgets, consider the most basic safety measure.

In a busy motel or hotel, there are employees in the hallways day and night. You may hear a knock on the door and a voice will tell you it's a maid, bellhop or security guard. Do not open the door until you can check.

Ask for the person's name and job title, and require waiting outside until you can verify the visit by calling the front desk. When anyone knocks on your hotel room door, use the eye hole to scan the face before opening.

Gadgets and safety procedures help you keep secure in your hotel room, but the most effective is your own common sense.