

BUYING GUIDE

THE DEFINITIVE BUYING GUIDE TO VIDEO SURVEILLANCE SYSTEMS



In the past, high costs and complex installation processes have stopped professional video surveillance systems from being within reach of the average home. Recent improvements in technology and greater worldwide demand have made video surveillance systems an increasingly affordable choice for many families across Australia.

Still, purchasing a video surveillance system is important to get right the first time. This guide will focus on:

- The key planning considerations
- The systems available for new installations
- Explaining the key system components
- Maximising your investment



KEY QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT BEFORE INVESTING

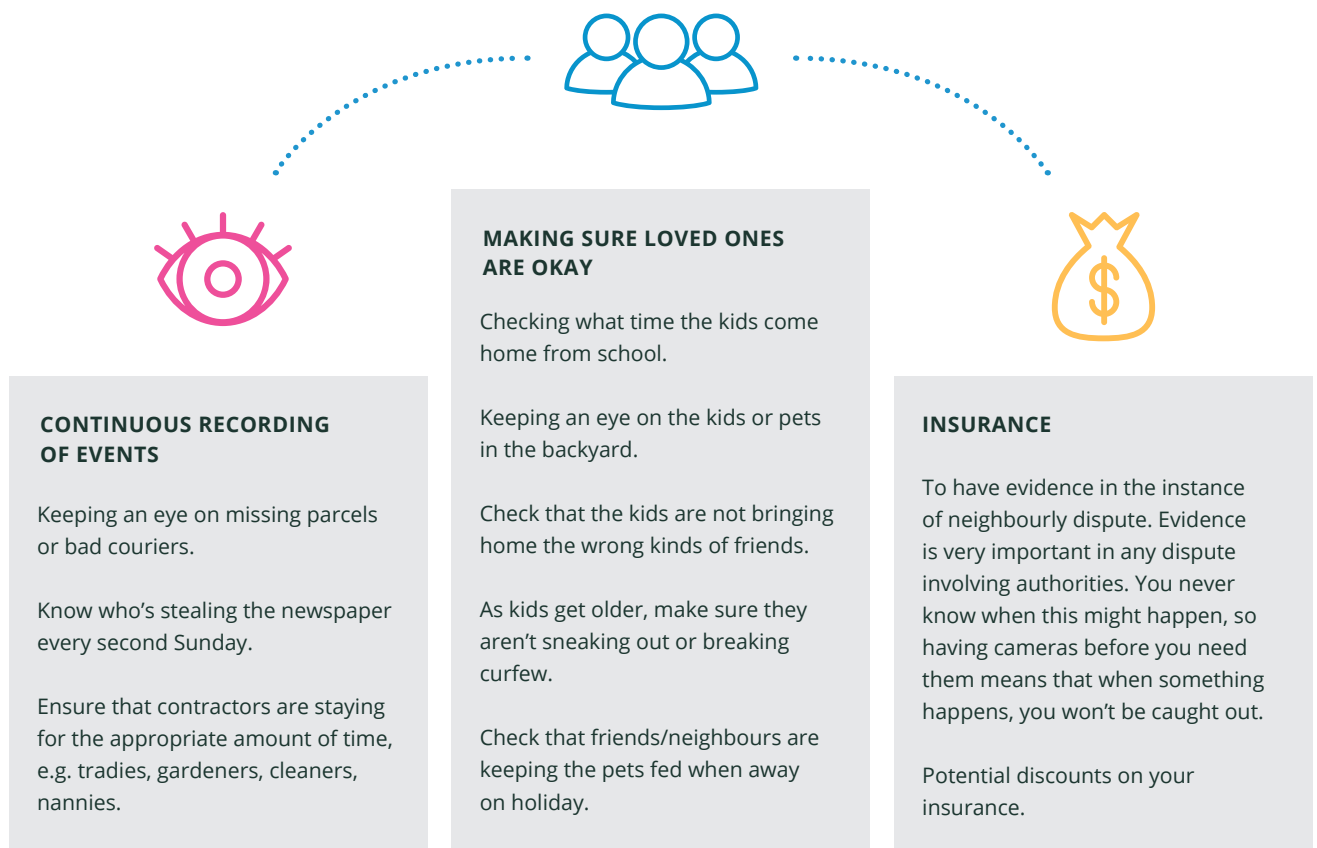
There are literally hundreds of thousands of different brands and off-the-shelf products on the market which will claim to be able to solve your security needs. The number one question to ask yourself when making the investment for any security system should be: what does the ideal solution look like for me?

This can be a difficult question to answer, so things to think about include the following questions:

- What were the recent events which may have prompted this enquiry?
- What are the specific issues which I want to overcome?
- What am I going to use the video recordings for?

Any reputable security specialist who comes to your home should start by determining what your needs are and tailor a solution to meet your specific requirements. Too often it comes to be that a pre-made package is offered before determining what specific problem needs to be resolved. That's why it's important that you are able to clearly state what you're looking to get out of the system & ensure that whomever you are speaking with is taking into consideration these needs.

EVERY HOME WILL HAVE A RANGE OF USES FOR VIDEO SURVEILLANCE. HERE ARE JUST A FEW THAT WE'VE COME ACROSS:





THE VIDEO SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM

01 SYSTEM TYPE

There are two main types of camera systems:



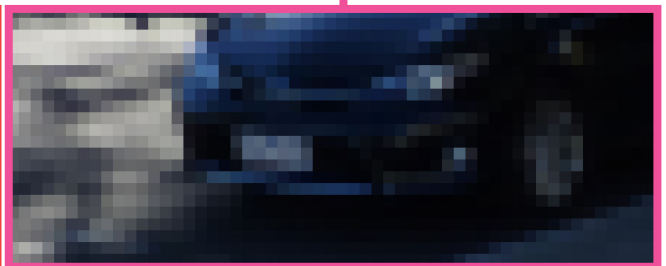
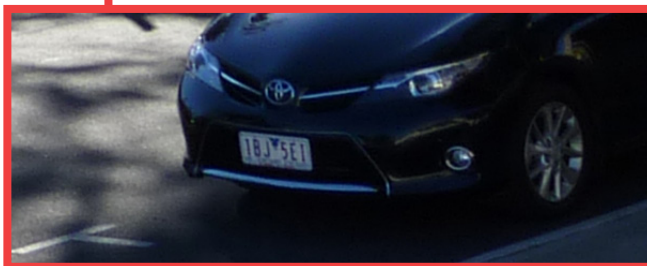
The decision about which system type to choose comes back down to what you're intending to use the footage for. Are you intending to use the footage to identify facial details and number plates, or are you just looking to check what time the kids are coming home from school?

Your key questions and outcomes should help guide your choice.



HD (5.0 MP)

SD (4 CIF)



HIGH DEFINITION

Also called digital IP video systems

STANDARD DEFINITION

Also called analogue video systems

<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Comes in 5.0 – 12.0 megapixel resolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ From CIF to 4CIF resolution (0.1 – 0.4 megapixel equivalent)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Ideal for capturing identifying details such as faces, logos and number plates	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Budget friendly surveillance, capturing basic details of intruders or vandals
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Future proof cabling for upgrades	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Useful for very small coverage ranges

02 CAMERA TYPE

THERE ARE TWO COMMON DESIGNS FOR HOME VIDEO SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS:

01 DOME CAMERA

- ✓ Compact size (typically <15cm in diameter)
- ✓ Available with infrared LEDs for illumination at night
- ✓ Weather resistant construction
- ✓ Vandal resistant design



02 BULLET CAMERA

- ✓ Compact size (typically <15cm at the longest point)
- ✓ Available with infrared LEDs for illumination at night
- ✓ Weather resistant construction
- ✓ Can be more flexible with positioning and angles in certain circumstances



03 REMOTE VIEWING

Viewing your system is possible with a modern smartphone, tablet, or computer with internet access. This simply requires a compatible internet connection at your home, connected to your video recorder. With the range of different internet technologies available in Australia (ADSL, cable, wireless, NBN, etc.) it's important to speak with a specialist about how to enable the ability to stream footage on your connection type.

Keep an eye out for systems which not only allow you to view live footage, but also view historical footage.

04 RECORDING & VIEWING

VIDEO RECORDER A

The video recorder is referred to as a Network Video Recorder (NVR) for high definition systems or a Digital Video Recorder (DVR) for standard definition systems. Remember your surveillance system is only as good as the unit that is recording the footage. Here are some key features to look out for.

MOTION DETECTION RECORDING

Recording units should be able to have all or specific cameras to only record when motion is being detected. This maximises your recording capacity by reducing the amount of time footage of a still environment is being recorded. This also makes it much easier to backtrack through footage to discover the specific point when an incident may have occurred, rather than having to re-watch hundreds of hours of irrelevant footage. Remember, not all motion recording is built equal. Recording units use computer algorithms to determine if anything is moving in its field of view. Some systems use algorithms which are too sensitive to motion; some systems use algorithms which are not sensitive enough at all.

RECORDING TO A COMMERCIAL GRADE HARD DRIVE

Regular hard-drives are designed for short term usage, e.g. for casual computing. They have the tendency to fail if left to run 24/7, so ensure that you're getting a commercial grade hard drive to make sure that the footage is available when you need it.

All cameras will be required to link back to a recording storage device so that the footage can be stored and viewed later. The recording station is comprised of three pieces of equipment: the video recorder, the video monitor, and potentially an uninterrupted power supply.



VIDEO MONITORING B

The video monitor can be supplied by the security installer or else they can use an existing monitor in the home, even your TV. The key is to have a monitor which has a high enough resolution to view all the details that you required.

UNINTERRUPTED POWER SUPPLY C

An uninterruptible power supply (UPS) is basically a special type of backup battery which can continue to power your video surveillance system even if the power is switched off or in the event of a blackout, also protecting the entire system during a power surge.

OTHER FEATURES

There's a whole slew of other features that the video recorder can do but at minimum you should expect the ability to:

- backup recorded video footage to a USB device or DVD
- automatically manage storage by deleting the oldest footage when the hard drive is full
- view multiple cameras on 1 screen
- select different recording qualities for different cameras

SUMMARY

There's a lot to consider when making the decision to invest in a video surveillance system. A good security specialist should be able to match up the technical features with your needs. Keep in mind the different options available but the number one tip is to be clear about what you're looking to get out of the system, and the rest should fall into place.

Speak to our staff

If you need any further advice or have any questions about your security needs please feel free to contact our Customer Care Centre using the details below.



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