



## Alarm Systems: A Brief Overview

DASHSYMONS  
s y s t e m s

Basic alarm systems incorporate a certain number of motion detectors, door sensors, sirens, strobe lights, keypads and remote controls, and sometimes swipe cards. All of these components work together to alert the appropriate people in the event of an alarm for example; monitoring stations or directly to a nominated mobile phone.

Components explained:

Motion Detectors: These come in many different types as they are certainly not a one size fits all device, these are as follows:

- Passive Infrared: Better known as PIR's. These work by watching bodies of heat (people, animals) moving across the detectors coverage area. This type of detection is commonly used in sensor lights. The quality of a PIR for an alarm system is much higher than sensor lights and is much less likely to false alarm.
- Microwave: These Sensor's send out microwave pulses and measure the reflection off a moving object, similar to a police radar gun. They are usually used with a PIR detector so that an alarm is only generated when both different types of detection are triggered. These are less likely to false alarm than a PIR detector on its own.
- Point-to-Point Beams: This type of detector is commonly used by retail stores to trigger an audible sound as customers walk past the beam. In an alarm sense they are commonly used outdoors to detect someone trespassing before they gain entry into a premises.

Door sensors: These monitor the state of doors and windows. They are technically referred to as Reed Switches. A Reed Switch is simply a magnet that that causes to wires two connect when a door or window is closed, this in turn tells the alarm system the state of the door or window. They have an extremely low false alarm rate.

Sirens and Strobe Lights: There are several different styles of sirens and strobes to choose from depending upon the noise level required and the size of the premises. For example in some cases it is better to have more small sirens around a property than one large one on the front. Also it is possible to completely hide the sirens and strobes so as to not disrupt the appearance of the building.

Keypads: In most cases the keypad of an alarm system is what the user becomes most familiar with as it is interacted with on a day-to-day basis. Keypads should be informative while still being easy for the users to interact



**DASH SYMONS**  
systems

with. There are many varieties of alarm systems, all with different keypads. It is important to understand the differences and make an informed decision as the using the keypad will become part of your daily routine.

Remote Controls: Some users prefer to arm and disarm their alarm systems with remote controls as this means you do not have to use a pin code or keypad daily. Most of the time the remote control for an alarm system can also be used to work electric gates and garage doors. This keeps life simple for users as they have one device to control several components.

Swipe Cards: These require a card reader to be placed somewhere on the premises where users can swipe a card to arm and disarm the alarm system. For businesses, depending on the selection of your alarm system, it can also be used as timeclocks, so there is a record of what staff member arrived on site at what time. Swipe Cards are similar to remote controls in that they do not require users to remember codes. They are also cheaper to replace than remote controls.

#### Reporting:

- Monitoring Stations: Monitoring Stations receive signals from alarm systems and report to the users about what they see. For example; they may phone customers and inform them that the backup battery is dying, let customers know that the alarm has been activated and in what zone. In the event of activations you can specify what you would like these companies to do; send a guard, call a nominated person to investigate the situation, etc. These companies monitor the activity on an alarm system for \$1 a day.
- Domestic Reporting: This is when the alarm system makes a phone call directly to a nominated phone number, such as a mobile. This type of reporting only sends an alert when the alarm is activated and does not advise what zone has been activated it just simply plays a siren sound.

All of the above mentioned can sound complicated, however at Dash Symons Systems we work together with our customers to provide a solution that will protect your premises now and into the future. We are also contactable all of the time via e-mail and during business hours via phone, we are always happy to answer any questions you may have.

