

# WebCams Fight Crime!

**Does your block still endure robberies, muggings, or car break-ins? An inexpensive web camera placed in your window pointed at the street may be your best protection against crime. And, if everyone on your street had a webcam, criminals would soon avoid your block. The president of the South Oxford Street Block Association is hoping to get homeowners to install home security webcams across the borough.**

With new wireless video surveillance options now available, one can easily set up a home webcam to protect you, your family, your block, and your neighbors. You do not need an expensive system, or a costly installation by a security company, or even wires drilled into your walls.

**How easy is it to install a webcam?** Very easy. All you need is a wi-fi network with an active internet connection, a computer or mobile device, and an electrical outlet near where you place the camera, such as in your front window. Not only could you see what is going on on the sidewalk in front of your apartment, you can see who is at your front door. And you can also access specific footage if you want (*even of your cats*).

After being robbed a few times, the president of the *South Oxford Street Block Association* in Fort Greene, Brooklyn, did a lot of research and found two low cost solutions. One solution uses a wi-fi camera made by **Dropcam**. The second method utilizes a new free app called **Presence** by People Power, which turns your old Apple devices (iPhone, iPad or iPod Touch) into wi-fi webcams on your home network. Presence can also send short motion detection clips right to your smartphone when something happens, and gives you face-to-face audio and video so you can talk back to your pets or relatives while you're on-the-go. The live video is accesible though other Apple devices which have the Presence app installed. (An Android version is coming soon.)

**How much does it cost?** A mountable, color HD **Dropcam** costs \$150 (or less) and allows you to view your password-protected double-encrypted footage on their website for free – as well as on your mobile devices and tablets. Dropcam offers a web-based option which records and stores video for an additional \$9 a month. The **Presence** system uses a free secure app which controls your old Apple devices. This November, the Presence company will offer a *Presence Pro* plan at \$5 a month, which will include web browser support so you can view and control multiple cameras simultaneously from your computers and mobile devices.

The main benefits of both these products are: super easy install, no wiring, inexpensive cost, remote viewing, and the optional ability to access recordings. In the six months since he installed his Dropcam, the association's president has been asked to provide access to the recorded footage twice – for a robbery next door, and a car break-in on the block. Plus, you can use your webcams in numerous other ways, like as a baby monitor or a pet-cam. And even if someone stole your webcam, the recording of that theft would be up on the cloud-based website, not in your camera, like some models which use an SD card. And for the month of September 2013, Dropcam is offering Brooklyn-based block associations and community groups a **10% discount on cameras and a free month of DVR services** by using the promo code **BROOKLYN13**. (Valid only through purchases on their website).

If you are one of those people worried about our society's lack of privacy, when was the last time you went into Manhattan? There are cameras everywhere, on most businesses, buildings, hallways and street corners. This is the future. **If the government can do it, so can you. Protect your home now.**



*South Oxford Street*  
**BLOCK ASSOCIATION**

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This initiative recommends the use of webcams as personal home security devices only. The cam's video footage is for private use only. If you plan to install a home webcam pointed towards a public area, we recommend you check with your landlord first and put up a sign indicating that the premises are under video surveillance.

Note: This is not an endorsement of any one brand. Do your own research before making any purchase. To find out more about these solutions, go to [dropcam.com](http://dropcam.com) (for Dropcam) and [peoplepowerco.com](http://peoplepowerco.com) (for Presence).