

Do I need extra coverage for high-value items?

Take the time to ensure that your most precious things are protected.

Most policies limit payments for individual items and categories

It is common practice for policies that cover personal property to have special limits on the amount that will be covered for individual items or items within specific categories. If you require the full replacement or market value to be insured, you will have to arrange for additional insurance and pay the appropriate premiums. The rationale behind this practice is to ensure that everyone is provided with a base level of insurance at reasonable rates and that those with high-value items cover their own extra costs. Examples include:

- Jewellery, watches, gems and furs
- Coin collections
- Silver and gold ware
- Money or bullion
- Business property

A thorough home inventory will tell you where you stand

One of the best ways to know if your belongings are covered is to do a complete home-contents inventory and review it with your broker. A home

inventory will help you itemize your losses if you need to make a claim, and it is a good way to test if your overall coverage level is right. You should include a list of contents, a brief description or photograph and an estimate of the replacement value of each item. Consider making a video of your rooms, cupboards and shelves and store it off-site. You can also take advantage of pre-made inventory tools such as the IBAC Home Inventory Form available online, at www.ibac.ca/inventory.

With a professional appraisal, you can arrange the extra insurance you need

If you have high-value items that exceed the limits in your policy and you want to have them separately insured, you will likely have to have the items valued by a professional appraiser so that the insurer knows what level of coverage to set. Depending on the type of property and how much information you can provide, an estimate of value can be determined. There is a fee for this service.

Tips on finding a personal belongings appraiser:

Start by asking your broker for a recommendation. Make sure that the appraiser you hire is professionally accredited, has relevant experience and will provide a written report that meets the standards of the profession.

