

Home Maintenance Guide for Homeowners

- Safety** - If you do nothing else in this guide, please make sure that these crucial safety items have been done.
 - Fire extinguisher: Verify expiration date, and inspect for damage. Ensure that you have a fire extinguisher in the kitchen, near the stove but not where you would need to reach across the stove to get it. If you do nothing else on this list, get a fire extinguisher and put it in the kitchen! It could save your life, and your home.
 - Exterior exits: verify that locks to doors and windows are secured from unauthorized entry. Replace strike plate screws with 3" woodscrews to tie strike plate into house framing.
 - Lubricate doors and windows, their locks, and their hardware to ensure that they work freely to allow you to exit in an emergency.
 - Smoke detectors: Test alarms. Consider preemptively replacing batteries. If the detector is more than 10 years old, replace it.
 - Carbon monoxide detectors: If you don't have carbon monoxide detectors, please install them. If you do, test them to make sure they work, especially near bedrooms.
 - Verify that, if you have a tanked hot water heater, the pressure relief valve is operating correctly.
 - Test Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCI) outlets to ensure they are working correctly.
 - Test garage door auto-reverse function.
 - Make sure you know where the main water shut off is and where the gas shut off is.
- Infrastructure**
 - Air Conditioning System Maintenance**
 - Clean or replace filters.
 - Check and clean ducts to improve air quality and system efficiency.
 - Have HVAC system professionally maintained before it gets hot.
 - Swamp Cooler System Maintenance** (if relevant)
 - Turn water to system back on.
 - Ensure pumps are working properly
 - Ensure float valve is working properly.
 - Inspect pads, and replace if necessary
 - Ensure fan is lubricated, and motor is operating correctly
 - Roof Inspection and Maintenance**
 - Clean out gutters.
 - Check for missing, damaged or cracking roofing material;, ie shingles, tiles, elastomeric coating, etc.
 - Inspect flashing around chimneys and vents.
 - Consider a professional roof inspection.
 - Plumbing and Water Systems**
 - Check faucets and showerheads for leaks or drips.
 - Inspect under sinks, dishwasher, washing machine, etc for any sign of leaks. Repair the leak immediately.

- Inspect water heater for leaks or corrosion.
- Flush water heater
- Consider professional drain cleaning to prevent clogs.
- Indoor**
 - General House Tasks**
 - Vacuum air ducts.
 - Dust lightbulbs.
 - Clean lampshades, light shades, or globes.
 - Clean/dust ceiling fan blades.
 - Clean windows inside and out, including screens and tracks.
 - Dust mini-blinds, other blinds and shades, door tops, and other hard to reach places dust may collect.
 - Clean all walls, ceilings, and floors.
 - Wax floors (if necessary).
 - Either have carpets and upholstery professionally cleaned, or rent the equipment to do it yourself
 - Replace filter for vacuum cleaner.
 - Organize frequently used drawers, cabinets, and closets (as needed)
 - Clean and polish gems, jewelry, silver, brass, copper.
 - Clean chandeliers and light fixtures.
 - Have the piano tuned (if relevant)
 - Vacuum books.
 - Move and clean underneath heavy furniture.
 - Review insurance coverage.
 - Update household inventory. If you ever have to make a homeowner's insurance claim, having an accurate inventory of your possessions will help ensure that you receive all of the insurance proceeds you are entitled to. The more specific you are with this inventory, the better, because the insurance company is required to make you whole.
 - Kitchen**
 - Clean the interior of microwave (easiest way to do that is to put a glass container in the microwave full of water, turn on the microwave for 10 minutes or so to steam the interior, then you can usually just wipe out the microwave.)
 - Clean refrigerator coils and door gasket.
 - Clean dishwasher screen/filter.
 - Run dishwasher empty with dishwasher cleaning solution.
 - Clean range hood filter (usually can go through the dishwasher).
 - Clean oven.
 - Bedrooms**
 - Wash or air pillows.
 - Wash or dry clean (as necessary) blankets, comforters, and quilts.
 - Remove out-of-season clothes, and store until the fall.
 - Bathrooms**
 - Inspect tile in kitchen and bathrooms. Loose tiles and grout need to be re-cemented and resealed.
 - Clean inside of bathroom cabinets, eliminating unused products.

- Laundry**
 - Clean lint trap system for dryer
 - Wash the lint filter in a sink with laundry detergent and a scrub brush.
- Outdoor**
 - Inspect and repair any irrigation systems.
 - Examine outdoor lighting for safety and ambiance.
 - Check decks and patios for needed repairs or resealing.
 - Clean and prepare any grills for use. Refill any propane tanks. Purchase any charcoal you will need.
 - Inspect home for signs of pests, especially in attic and basement.
 - Seal up any entry points to prevent pests from entering.
 - Look for any animal nests on walls, fixtures and eaves. Remove any you find, and take the necessary steps to prevent continued habitation.
 - Schedule a professional pest control service if needed.
 - Inspect exterior walls, looking for cracks, paint failure, and damage to trim or siding.
 - Prune any tree limbs that are too close to the house, especially removing any that touch the house.
 - Repair/replace damaged window screens.
 - Get small engine equipment, like lawnmowers or leaf blowers, set up.
 - Lubricate garage door; tracks, hinges, chain, etc