



ANNUAL HOME MAINTENANCE GUIDE

12 MONTHS OF SIMPLE CHECKS TO HELP YOU STAY AHEAD OF HOME REPAIRS

MONTHLY CHECKS Small, manageable tasks.	SEASONAL PRIORITIES Focus on what matters now.	EARLY WARNING SIGNS Know what deserves attention.
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Home maintenance does not have to mean spending every weekend working on the house. This guide breaks routine observation and upkeep into small monthly tasks so problems are easier to spot before they become larger repairs.

Designed with North Carolina seasons in mind, but useful for homeowners anywhere. Adjust timing for your climate, home construction, equipment, and manufacturer recommendations.

Your Home. Your Plans. Our Purpose.

JANUARY

START THE YEAR WITH SAFETY AND INDOOR SYSTEMS.

■	Test smoke and carbon monoxide alarms using the manufacturer's test procedure.
■	Inspect your HVAC filter and replace it if needed.
■	Look under sinks, around toilets, and near the water heater for leaks.
■	Check exterior doors for drafts and damaged weatherstripping.
■	Make sure the main water shutoff and electrical panel remain accessible.
■	Check fire extinguishers and household emergency supplies.
■	Look for condensation or moisture around windows during cold weather.
KEEP AN EYE ON	Frozen-pipe risk during hard freezes, especially at exterior walls, crawlspaces, garages, and hose connections.
HOME READY PRO TIP	Know where your main water shutoff is before freezing weather. A few minutes can matter if a pipe splits.

FEBRUARY

CATCH SMALL INDOOR REPAIRS BEFORE SPRING PROJECTS BEGIN.

■	Inspect bathroom caulk around tubs, showers, and sinks.
■	Check toilets for running, rocking, or slow leaks.
■	Clean bathroom exhaust-fan covers and verify the fans operate.
■	Inspect accessible appliance water-supply lines for moisture or corrosion.
■	Check doors, cabinet hinges, and hardware for loose screws.
■	Look at ceilings and walls for new stains or cracks.
■	Review spring repair projects and make a priority list.
KEEP AN EYE ON	Recurring moisture, musty odors, or stains. Repeated symptoms usually deserve investigation rather than another cosmetic repair.
HOME READY PRO TIP	Bathrooms are controlled-moisture environments. Damaged caulk is simple maintenance; soft walls or recurring moisture are not.

MARCH

BEGIN THE SPRING EXTERIOR WALKAROUND.

■	Walk the exterior and look for damaged siding, trim, peeling paint, and open joints.
■	Inspect gutters and downspouts from the ground for obvious damage or overflow staining.
■	Check that downspouts discharge away from the foundation.
■	Look for winter damage to decks, porches, stairs, and railings.
■	Inspect exterior doors and window trim for deterioration.
■	Check grading for ponding or erosion near the house.
■	Clear leaves and debris from accessible exterior drainage areas.
KEEP AN EYE ON	Water collecting near the foundation or crawlspace after spring rain.
HOME READY PRO TIP	Take photos of questionable cracks, stains, or exterior damage. Comparing photos later makes change easier to recognize.

APRIL

FOCUS ON DRAINAGE, EXTERIOR SEALS, AND SPRING CLEANUP.

■	Clean gutters safely or schedule professional cleaning where ladder access is unsafe.
■	Check downspout extensions and splash blocks.
■	Inspect exterior caulk at appropriate windows, doors, and penetrations.
■	Wash siding, porches, and walkways using methods appropriate for the surface.
■	Trim shrubs away from siding and accessible HVAC equipment.
■	Check outdoor faucets for freeze damage or leakage.
■	Inspect screens and windows before warmer weather.
KEEP AN EYE ON	Rotten trim, soft wood, or peeling paint that returns after previous repairs.
HOME READY PRO TIP	Do not seal every exterior opening you see. Some wall and window systems are designed to drain; when unsure, identify the detail first.

MAY

PREPARE COOLING SYSTEMS AND OUTDOOR LIVING AREAS.

■	Inspect or replace the HVAC filter.
■	Clear leaves, weeds, and debris from around the outdoor HVAC unit without damaging the fins.
■	Test the thermostat in cooling mode before the hottest weather arrives.
■	Check deck boards, steps, and railings for looseness or deterioration.
■	Inspect exterior lighting and replace failed bulbs with the correct type.
■	Check hose connections and outdoor plumbing for leaks.
■	Clean dryer lint areas and inspect the accessible exterior vent termination.
KEEP AN EYE ON	HVAC icing, water around the indoor unit, weak airflow, or unusual noises.
HOME READY PRO TIP	Finding an air-conditioning problem in May is much easier than discovering it during the first extreme heat wave.

JUNE

MANAGE HEAT, HUMIDITY, AND WATER.

■	Check indoor humidity and use bathroom/kitchen ventilation appropriately.
■	Inspect crawlspace or basement conditions only if safely accessible.
■	Look for condensation on ductwork, piping, or windows.
■	Check sinks, toilets, dishwasher, and refrigerator water connections for leaks.
■	Inspect shower-door seals and bathroom caulk.
■	Clean ceiling-fan blades and verify fans are secure.
■	Check exterior drainage after a heavy summer rain.
KEEP AN EYE ON	Persistent musty odors, standing water, condensation, or unusually high indoor humidity.
HOME READY PRO TIP	Moisture problems are easiest to correct when you identify the source - plumbing, drainage, condensation, roof, or exterior water - instead of treating only the symptom.

JULY

GIVE HARDWORKING SYSTEMS A MID-SUMMER CHECK.

■	Inspect the HVAC filter and replace if needed.
■	Keep supply and return vents open and unobstructed.
■	Check the outdoor HVAC unit for grass clippings and debris.
■	Look at the water heater and nearby floor for leakage or corrosion.
■	Check toilets and faucets for slow leaks.
■	Inspect deck/porch fasteners and railings after heavy use.
■	Check exterior doors and locks for proper operation.
KEEP AN EYE ON	An HVAC system that runs constantly, repeatedly trips a breaker, leaks water, or stops maintaining temperature.
HOME READY PRO TIP	A dirty filter is a homeowner task. Refrigerant, internal electrical, and mechanical HVAC repairs are professional work.

AUGUST

PREPARE FOR STORMS AND LATE-SUMMER WEATHER.

■	Review your household emergency information and utility contact numbers.
■	Make sure flashlights and batteries are easy to find.
■	Inspect trees and branches from the ground for obvious storm hazards.
■	Check gutters/downspouts for summer debris.
■	Secure or plan storage for lightweight outdoor furniture and objects before severe weather.
■	Look for loose fence, gate, deck, or porch components.
■	Review where your water shutoff, electrical panel, and gas shutoff are located.
KEEP AN EYE ON	Loose exterior components, damaged trees, clogged drainage, and anything that could worsen during high winds or heavy rain.
HOME READY PRO TIP	Do storm preparation before a warning is issued. Once severe weather arrives, avoid ladders, roofs, trees, and electrical hazards.

SEPTEMBER

TRANSITION THE HOME FROM SUMMER INTO FALL.

■	Walk the exterior and note paint, siding, trim, caulk, and wood repairs needed before colder weather.
■	Inspect gutters and drainage before leaves begin falling heavily.
■	Check windows and exterior doors for damaged weatherstripping.
■	Inspect deck boards, stairs, and railings.
■	Check exterior faucets and hoses for leaks.
■	Inspect the HVAC filter and schedule heating service if appropriate.
■	Review fall repair priorities before daylight and temperatures drop.
KEEP AN EYE ON	Deferred exterior maintenance that can allow winter moisture into wood, walls, or openings.
HOME READY PRO TIP	Fall is an excellent catch-up season: fix the small exterior items summer exposed before winter makes them harder to address.

OCTOBER

FOCUS ON LEAVES, HEATING, AND WEATHER PROTECTION.

■	Clean gutters as leaves accumulate, using safe access practices.
■	Verify downspouts remain connected and discharge away from the home.
■	Test heating operation before sustained cold weather.
■	Replace or inspect the HVAC filter.
■	Check smoke and CO alarms.
■	Inspect door sweeps and weatherstripping.
■	Disconnect garden hoses before freezing weather where appropriate.
KEEP AN EYE ON	Gutter overflow, blocked downspouts, and heating equipment that smells unusual or does not operate normally.
HOME READY PRO TIP	Never ignore a combustion or gas concern. If you smell gas, leave the building and contact the gas utility/emergency services from a safe location.

NOVEMBER

PREPARE FOR FREEZING TEMPERATURES AND HOLIDAY LOADS.

■	Confirm exterior hoses are disconnected and vulnerable plumbing is prepared for cold weather.
■	Know how to shut off water quickly in case of a freeze-related leak.
■	Check weatherstripping and obvious drafts.
■	Inspect accessible plumbing in garages, crawlspaces, or exterior-wall areas for vulnerability.
■	Keep electrical panels and shutoffs clear of holiday storage.
■	Use extension cords only temporarily and within their ratings.
■	Check exterior stairs, walks, and handrails before winter weather.
KEEP AN EYE ON	Cold-weather plumbing exposure and overloaded electrical circuits during holiday use.
HOME READY PRO TIP	Do not use unsafe heat sources to thaw pipes. Never use an open flame or torch on household plumbing.

DECEMBER

FINISH THE YEAR WITH RECORDS, SAFETY, AND A SIMPLE REVIEW.

■	Test smoke and CO alarms according to manufacturer instructions.
■	Inspect the HVAC filter.
■	Check under sinks and around the water heater for leaks.
■	Review repairs completed during the year and keep receipts/warranties.
■	Update appliance model/serial numbers and home-service contacts.
■	Review your emergency information sheet.
■	Make a short list of projects to address next year.
KEEP AN EYE ON	Anything you have 'been meaning to watch' for several months. Recurring problems deserve a decision.
HOME READY PRO TIP	Home maintenance works best as a routine, not a marathon. A short monthly check can prevent a long repair list later.

YEAR-END HOME MAINTENANCE RECORD

Use this page to keep track of the repairs, service, and improvements you completed this year.

DATE	AREA / SYSTEM	WORK COMPLETED	CONTRACTOR / NOTES

NEXT YEAR'S PRIORITIES

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

HOME READY PRO TIP: Keep this guide with inspection reports, warranties, receipts, paint information, and appliance records. A simple history of the home makes future repairs and planning much easier.

General homeowner education only. Use safe access practices, follow manufacturer instructions, and use an appropriately qualified professional when a task involves electrical wiring, gas, roofing, structural components, significant water intrusion, unsafe access, or conditions beyond your experience.