

Service with Purpose.



NEW HOMEOWNER GUIDE

CONFIDENCE TODAY.
A STRONGER TOMORROW.

*Practical Tips. Helpful Checklists.
A Happier Home.*

*New Home.
New Possibilities.*



LEARN | MAINTAIN | PROTECT | ENJOY



SETTLE IN
Make it your own



TAKE CARE
Keep it running



BUILD VALUE
Protect your investment



LOVE WHERE YOU LIVE
For years to come

1. Congratulations on Your New Home

Buying a home is a major milestone. The first year is also when you learn how the house behaves: where the shutoffs are, which sounds are normal, how water drains around the property, what needs seasonal attention, and which small repairs should not be ignored.

You do not need to know everything on day one. A good homeowner builds familiarity over time and keeps a simple record of maintenance, repairs, warranties, and improvements.

What this guide will help you do

Get settled: handle the important first-month tasks.

Know the systems: understand the basics of roof, HVAC, plumbing, electrical, water heater, foundation, attic, windows, and doors.

Maintain: use a seasonal routine to prevent avoidable problems.

DIY wisely: tackle straightforward jobs and recognize when professional help is the better choice.

HOME READY PRO TIP

Start a home file now. Keep your inspection report, closing documents, appliance information, paint colors, receipts, contractor invoices, warranties, and before-and-after photos together.

Same home. New responsibilities. New possibilities.

Homeownership becomes much easier when maintenance is treated as a routine instead of a reaction to emergencies.

2. Your First 30 Days

The first month is the ideal time to learn the home's basic controls and establish a maintenance baseline.

Done	First 30-Day Tasks
☐	Change or rekey exterior door locks and confirm every key works.
☐	Locate the main water shutoff and make sure household members know where it is.
☐	Locate the electrical panel and identify the major breakers.
☐	Test smoke and carbon-monoxide alarms; replace batteries as needed.
☐	Replace the HVAC filter and record the filter size.
☐	Check under sinks, around toilets, and near the water heater for active leaks.
☐	Run faucets, showers, tubs, toilets, disposal, and major appliances to learn normal operation.
☐	Review the home inspection report and create a prioritized repair list.
☐	Locate exterior hose bib shutoffs if the home has them.
☐	Review appliance, roof, HVAC, and other transferable warranty information.
☐	Photograph the home's current condition and major equipment labels for your records.
☐	Learn trash/recycling schedules, HOA requirements if applicable, and local utility contacts.

HOME READY PRO TIP

Do not wait for an emergency to find the water shutoff. A burst supply line can release a surprising amount of water in only a few minutes.

3. Know Your Home's Essential Systems

ROOF & GUTTERS

Look periodically for missing or damaged shingles, loose flashing, clogged gutters, damaged downspouts, and signs of water staining inside. Keep roof drainage moving away from the foundation.

HEATING & COOLING (HVAC)

Know the filter size and replacement schedule. Keep supply and return vents unobstructed and keep outdoor equipment clear of leaves and vegetation. Professional service intervals depend on the equipment and manufacturer recommendations.

PLUMBING

Know the main shutoff. Watch for slow leaks under sinks, around toilets, at hose connections, and near the water heater. Small leaks can damage cabinets, flooring, framing, and finishes over time.

ELECTRICAL

Know where the panel is and keep access clear. Repeated breaker trips, burning odors, hot or discolored receptacles, buzzing, sparking, or flickering that cannot be explained by a bulb deserve professional attention.

WATER HEATER

Know whether it is gas or electric, its approximate age, and where its shutoff is located. Watch for corrosion, leaking, unusual noises, or water around the base.

FOUNDATION, ATTIC, WINDOWS & DOORS

Watch for new or changing cracks, water intrusion, persistent dampness, sagging, pest activity, damaged seals, and doors or windows that suddenly become difficult to operate.

HOME READY PRO TIP

Take a clear photo of the model and serial number plate on major equipment. It can save time when you need parts, warranty information, or service.

SEASONAL MAINTENANCE GUIDE

A Little Effort Goes a Long Way

Regular maintenance helps protect your investment and can prevent small issues from becoming costly repairs. Use this checklist as a practical starting point and adjust it for your home, climate, and equipment.

SPRING

- ☐ Clean gutters and downspouts; confirm water drains away from the foundation.
- ☐ Inspect roof and exterior surfaces for winter or storm damage.
- ☐ Check exterior caulk, siding, trim, windows, and doors.
- ☐ Test outdoor faucets and irrigation systems, if applicable.
- ☐ Prepare or service the cooling system and replace the HVAC filter as needed.

SUMMER

- ☐ Keep shrubs and landscaping trimmed away from siding and HVAC equipment.
- ☐ Inspect decks, porches, patios, steps, railings, and fences.
- ☐ Watch drainage around the property during heavy rain.
- ☐ Clean bathroom exhaust covers and check the dryer exhaust path.
- ☐ Check for insects, pests, wood deterioration, and exterior moisture problems.

FALL

- ☐ Clean gutters and downspouts after leaves fall.
- ☐ Inspect windows and doors for drafts or damaged weatherstripping.
- ☐ Service or prepare the heating system and replace filters as needed.
- ☐ Check exterior drainage before winter weather.
- ☐ Trim branches away from the roof and structure where appropriate.

WINTER

- ☐ Protect exposed plumbing from freezing where applicable.
- ☐ Check the heating system and keep vents unobstructed.
- ☐ Watch for roof, gutter, or ice-related problems after severe weather.
- ☐ Look for moisture in the attic, crawlspace, basement, or around windows.
- ☐ Test smoke and carbon-monoxide alarms according to manufacturer guidance.

HOME READY PRO TIP

Put four recurring reminders on your calendar: one at the beginning of each season. A 20-minute walk around the home can catch loose caulk, drainage problems, leaks, damaged trim, and other small changes before they become larger repairs.

4. Seasonal Maintenance Guide

A little routine maintenance can prevent larger repairs. Adjust the schedule for your climate, property, equipment, and manufacturer requirements.

SPRING

Done	Spring
☐	Clean gutters and confirm downspouts drain away from the house.
☐	Inspect roof and exterior for winter damage.
☐	Check exterior caulk, siding, trim, and painted surfaces.
☐	Test outdoor faucets and irrigation if applicable.
☐	Service or prepare cooling equipment as appropriate.

SUMMER

Done	Summer
☐	Keep landscaping trimmed away from siding and HVAC equipment.
☐	Check decks, steps, railings, patios, and fences for loose or damaged components.
☐	Watch for drainage problems during heavy rain.
☐	Clean bathroom exhaust covers and dryer vent areas.
☐	Change HVAC filters as needed.

FALL & WINTER

Done	Fall / Winter
☐	Clean gutters after leaves fall and inspect downspouts.
☐	Check weatherstripping and visible gaps around windows and doors.
☐	Prepare exterior plumbing for freezing temperatures where applicable.
☐	Service heating equipment as appropriate.
☐	Look for attic or crawlspace moisture after major weather events.

5. Easy DIY Tasks for Homeowners

Many small maintenance jobs are reasonable for a homeowner with basic tools and a little patience. Follow manufacturer instructions and stop if the condition is different from what you expected.

Done	Beginner-Friendly Tasks
☐	Replace light bulbs: match the fixture's requirements and use the correct bulb type and wattage.
☐	Change HVAC filters: install the correct size with the airflow arrow facing the proper direction.
☐	Replace smoke/CO alarm batteries: test the alarm afterward and follow the manufacturer's replacement schedule.
☐	Clean faucet aerators: remove mineral buildup that can reduce flow or distort the stream.
☐	Tighten loose cabinet and door hardware: small adjustments can improve function quickly.
☐	Re-caulk simple dry-area trim gaps: remove loose material first and use the correct caulk for the location.
☐	Clean gutters: only when they are safely accessible and you can use a ladder correctly.
☐	Reset a tripped GFCI or breaker: only when there is no sign of overheating, damage, water exposure, or repeated tripping.
☐	Replace a basic toilet flapper: a common cause of a toilet that intermittently runs.

HOME READY PRO TIP

A DIY repair should leave you more confident, not less. If you are unsure what caused the problem, identify the cause before replacing parts or covering damage.

6. When to Call a Professional

Some jobs carry safety, code, structural, or property-damage risks that make professional evaluation the better choice.

Done	Professional Help May Be Appropriate
☐	Repeated breaker trips, burning smells, sparking, damaged wiring, or a hot electrical component.
☐	Gas odor or a suspected gas-system problem. Follow utility/emergency guidance immediately.
☐	Water leaking inside walls, ceilings, floors, crawlspaces, or near electrical equipment.
☐	Roof leaks, missing roofing after a storm, or conditions requiring unsafe roof access.
☐	HVAC equipment that will not heat or cool properly, leaks refrigerant, or has electrical/mechanical problems.
☐	Large, changing, displaced, or concerning foundation/framing cracks; sagging or damaged structural members.
☐	Persistent moisture, extensive mold-like growth, or recurring water intrusion.
☐	Major plumbing alterations, sewer problems, or repairs beyond simple fixture maintenance.
☐	Pest damage involving structural wood or an active infestation.
☐	Any repair that requires permits, licensing, specialty testing, or equipment you are not trained to use.

HOME READY PRO TIP

For urgent conditions involving fire, gas, major electrical hazards, or uncontrolled water, protect people first and contact the appropriate emergency service or utility before worrying about the repair.

7. Your Ongoing Homeowner Checklist

Use this page as a simple maintenance rhythm. Exact intervals vary by home, equipment, climate, and manufacturer guidance.

Done	Homeowner Routine
☐	Check HVAC filters regularly and replace when needed.
☐	Test smoke and carbon-monoxide alarms according to manufacturer guidance.
☐	Walk the exterior after major storms and look for damage or drainage issues.
☐	Check under sinks and around toilets for leaks.
☐	Keep gutters and downspouts clear and draining away from the foundation.
☐	Keep landscaping from trapping moisture against the house.
☐	Inspect visible caulk and sealant around wet areas and exterior penetrations.
☐	Check doors, windows, locks, handrails, steps, decks, and fences for loose components.
☐	Watch for new water stains, unusual odors, pests, cracks, or changes in how doors and windows operate.
☐	Keep dryer exhaust and ventilation paths clean and unobstructed.
☐	Maintain a record of repairs, improvements, paint colors, filters, and equipment service.
☐	Set aside a home-maintenance budget for expected repairs and future replacement of major systems.

HOME READY PRO TIP

Once or twice a year, walk the property with no project in mind. Look up, down, under sinks, around the foundation, in the attic or crawlspace if safely accessible, and behind rarely moved items. Catching a change early is often the difference between maintenance and a major repair.

THE HOME READY PROS

Your Home. Your Plans. Our Purpose.

Repairs | Maintenance | Painting | Carpentry | Home Improvements

Whether you just received the keys or have been in your home for years, a practical maintenance plan helps protect the investment and makes homeownership easier.

Important: This guide is general educational information. Building codes, licensing requirements, maintenance intervals, and property conditions vary. Follow manufacturer instructions and consult the appropriate qualified professional for property-specific concerns.