

52-Week Home Maintenance Calendar

Olympia & Western Washington — First-Time Buyer Edition

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Homeownership in Olympia comes with a unique calendar. The wet season runs October through June, limiting outdoor work to a narrow dry window — roughly July 4 through mid-September. This guide gives you one actionable task per week, timed to the actual Thurston County climate, with a focus on the issues that surprise first-time buyers most: roof moss, carpenter ants, crawl space moisture, and the damage that follows deferred maintenance.

Tasks are labeled Indoor, Outdoor, Inspection, or Safety so you can quickly find what's appropriate for any given week's weather. Copy any tip directly into your newsletter, share it with clients, or use it as your own quarterly punch list.

Tag	What it means
Indoor	Can be done any time, rain or shine — no outdoor access needed.
Outdoor	Requires dry conditions. Best during the Olympia dry window (July–Sept).
Inspection	A visual or hands-on check — document findings with photos.
Safety	Fire, flood, or injury risk if skipped. Prioritize these.

Jan–Feb Winter	Mar–May Spring	Jun–Sept Summer / Dry	Oct–Dec Fall
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Wk 1

Know your water shutoff

Every first-time buyer needs to find and test their main water shutoff valve before a pipe emergency. It's usually in the crawl space, utility room, or near the water heater. Turn it off and back on so you know it works.

Indoor

Safety

Wk 2

Test smoke and CO detectors

Press the test button on every smoke and carbon monoxide detector. Replace batteries if more than a year old. Olympia's wet winters mean more time indoors with gas appliances — CO safety matters.

Indoor

Safety

Wk 3

Check attic for condensation

Cold January nights can cause warm interior air to condense on attic sheathing. Grab a flashlight and look for dark staining, frost, or wet insulation. Ventilation or insulation issues caught early prevent mold.

Indoor

Inspection

Wk 4

Inspect under sinks for slow leaks

Pull open all cabinet doors under kitchen and bathroom sinks. Look for water stains, soft spots in the cabinet floor, or a musty smell. A slow drip in Olympia's damp climate can cause mold in weeks.

Indoor

Inspection

Wk 5

Make a home systems inventory

Write down the age, brand, and last service date for your roof, water heater, furnace/heat pump, and appliances. Knowing when things are due for replacement prevents expensive surprises — and it's great to have at resale.

Indoor

Wk 6

Check GFCI outlets

GFCI outlets are the ones with 'test' and 'reset' buttons — found in kitchens, bathrooms, garages, and outdoors. Press test (it should cut power), then reset. A failed GFCI is a shock hazard and can fail code inspection at resale.

Indoor

Safety

Wk 7

Assess storm damage from this winter

Walk your property on a dry day and look for wind-damaged fencing, fallen branches close to the house, and lifted roof edges. February storms in Thurston County can be deceptively damaging. Document anything with photos.

Outdoor

Inspection

Wk 8

Clean range hood filter

Pop out the mesh filter above your stove and soak it in hot soapy water or run it through the dishwasher. Grease buildup is a fire risk and a blocked filter makes your kitchen smell. Takes 10 minutes.

Indoor

Safety

March

Early Spring

Wk 9

Roof moss inspection

March is your first clear look at winter moss growth. Binoculars from the yard work fine — you don't need to get on the roof. Look for green/black patches, lifted shingles, and soft spots at the ridge. Document what you see.

Outdoor

Inspection

Wk 10

Apply zinc moss treatment

Once it stops raining for a stretch, apply a zinc sulfate or liquid moss killer to the roof. In Olympia, moss grows back every year if untreated. Zinc strips at the ridge offer long-term prevention — rain slowly releases zinc down the roof.

Outdoor

Wk 11

Inspect foundation vents and screens

Crawl around the base of your home and check every foundation vent. Screens should be intact — torn screens are a welcome mat for rodents and carpenter ants, which are rampant in this area. Repair or replace any that are damaged.

Outdoor

Inspection

Wk 12

Test exterior faucets and hose bibs

Now that hard freezes are mostly done, turn on each exterior faucet slowly and check for drips or unexpected spray behind walls. A cracked hose bib from winter freeze can be leaking inside your walls without being obvious.

Outdoor

Inspection

Wk 13

Treat perimeter for carpenter ants

Carpenter ants peak in April and May in Western WA. They don't eat wood — they excavate it, and they target moisture-damaged wood first. Apply a perimeter spray around the foundation and any wood structures. Catch them early.

Outdoor

Safety

Wk 14

Check window seals and caulking

Walk each window inside and out. Look for fogging between panes (failed seal), soft wood on sills, peeling paint, or gaps in caulk. Failed seals are expensive to ignore — water gets into the wall framing over time.

Indoor

Inspection

Wk 15

Flush the water heater

Sediment from Olympia's water supply settles at the bottom of your tank and reduces efficiency. Attach a garden hose to the drain valve and flush until the water runs clear. Most first-time buyers never know this is a thing.

Indoor

Wk 16

Clean gutters — spring pass

April showers plus debris from winter means your gutters are full. Clear everything and run water through downspouts to confirm they drain freely. Downspouts should extend at least 4 feet away from your foundation.

Outdoor

Wk 17

Clear vegetation from foundation

Shrubs, bark mulch, and overgrown plants against your siding trap moisture and invite termites, ants, and rot. Keep a 6-inch clearance between any organic material and your home's base. Common issue in Olympia yards.

Outdoor

Wk 18 **Inspect crawl space for moisture**

May is a good time before summer — bring a flashlight and check the vapor barrier for tears, standing water, or dark mold staining on floor joists. Olympia's clay soils hold water and push moisture up. A failed vapor barrier is serious.

Indoor **Inspection**

Wk 19 **Check attic insulation and ventilation**

Peek into your attic and look for gaps in insulation, signs of rodent activity (droppings, nesting), and whether soffit vents are blocked. Proper ventilation prevents moisture buildup that leads to mold and rafter rot.

Indoor **Inspection**

Wk 20 **Plan your summer project list**

The Olympia dry window is roughly July 4 through mid-September. Exterior painting, deck staining, pressure washing, and roofing work all depend on dry weather. Make your list now so you can schedule contractors before they're booked.

Indoor

June Early Summer

Wk 21 **Inspect deck boards and fasteners**

Walk your deck and look for soft or springy boards, raised nails or screws, and faded or peeling sealant. June is ideal — it's drying out but still early enough to schedule work before the heat. Probe any soft spots with a screwdriver.

Outdoor **Inspection**

Wk 22 **Check attic and roof after any early heat**

Heat buildup in an under-ventilated attic accelerates shingle wear from below. Check that ridge and soffit vents are clear. On older Olympia homes, this is a common overlooked issue.

Indoor **Inspection**

Wk 23 **Clean dryer vent duct**

Disconnect the dryer from the wall and brush out the full duct run to the exterior vent. Lint-clogged dryer vents are a leading cause of house fires nationally. The exterior flap should open and close freely.

Indoor **Safety**

Wk 24

Service heat pump or mini-split

Most Olympia homes now use heat pumps or mini-splits. Before summer heat arrives, clean the air handler filters, clear debris from the outdoor unit, and have a tech check refrigerant if it's been 2+ years. Efficiency and lifespan depend on it.

Indoor

July

Dry Season

Wk 25

Pressure wash exterior siding

July is the prime window for exterior work. Pressure wash siding to remove algae, dirt, and moss residue before painting or sealing. Use a wide fan tip and keep distance on wood siding to avoid damage. Let dry completely before any coating.

Outdoor

Wk 26

Repaint or touch up exterior trim

The Olympia dry window is the only reliable time to paint outdoors. Inspect all trim, fascia, and wood siding for bare or peeling areas — exposed wood absorbs winter moisture fast. Use a quality exterior primer before topcoat.

Outdoor

Wk 27

Apply deck stain or sealer

After pressure washing and drying (48-72 hours minimum), apply a penetrating deck stain or sealer. Water should bead on the surface — if it soaks in, it's time. This is the single best investment to extend deck life in a wet climate.

Outdoor

Wk 28

Trim trees away from roof and power lines

July dry conditions make this ideal. Branches within 10 feet of your roofline drop debris that accelerates moss and holds moisture. Also check for any limbs overhanging power service lines — those require the utility company, not you.

Outdoor

Safety

August

Dry Season

Wk 29 **Inspect and re-caulk exterior**

Walk every penetration point: where pipes exit, window frames, door frames, where siding meets trim. Re-caulk any gaps with a paintable, exterior-grade siliconized caulk. This is the most cost-effective weatherproofing you can do.

Outdoor

Wk 30 **Clean out garage and inspect floor**

Olympia garages collect moisture and pests. Look for rodent droppings, check the floor for cracks that let moisture in, and ensure the weather seal at the bottom of the garage door is intact. A good seal keeps out mice and water.

Indoor **Inspection**

Wk 31 **Check and seal driveway cracks**

If you have an asphalt driveway, late summer is the time to crack-fill before rain returns. Water in cracks expands and deepens damage each winter. Concrete driveways should have joints caulked. Small repairs now prevent big ones later.

Outdoor

Wk 32 **Test and inspect sump pump**

Pour a bucket of water into the pit and confirm the float trigger activates and water evacuates. August is the perfect time — if there's a failure you want to find it before the October rains arrive. Replace pumps older than 7-10 years proactively.

Indoor **Inspection** **Safety**

September Late Summer

Wk 33 **Clean chimney or wood stove flue**

If you have a wood-burning fireplace or stove, get it swept before the first fire of the season. Creosote buildup is a house fire waiting to happen. Olympia fire season means burning restrictions in summer — this is the right timing.

Indoor **Safety**

Wk 34 **Check weatherstripping on all exterior doors**

Close each door and look for daylight at the edges or feel for drafts. Weatherstripping is cheap and dramatically reduces heating costs — especially in older Olympia homes. Replace any that's cracked, compressed, or missing.

Indoor

Wk 35	<p>Seal gaps around pipes and utility entries</p> <p>Every pipe, wire, and duct penetration through your exterior walls is a potential rodent entry. As temperatures drop, mice seek warmth. Stuff steel wool in gaps and seal with foam or caulk. This is the time — before October migration.</p> <p>Outdoor Safety</p>
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Wk 36	<p>Service furnace before heating season</p> <p>Schedule your annual furnace or heat pump tune-up in September before contractors get booked in October. Replace filters, check the heat exchanger for cracks (a CO risk on gas units), and confirm your thermostat is working.</p> <p>Indoor</p>
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October	Fall
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Wk 37	<p>Winterize hose bibs</p> <p>Disconnect all garden hoses and shut off the interior valve for each exterior faucet. Water left in the line freezes, expands, and cracks the pipe inside the wall. Olympia can get hard freezes by November — don't wait.</p> <p>Outdoor Safety</p>
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Wk 38	<p>Final gutter clean before rain season</p> <p>Clean gutters in late October after the last major leaf drop but before sustained rain. Clogged gutters overflow against your foundation and rot fascia boards. Add gutter guards if you're tired of this task — they pay for themselves.</p> <p>Outdoor</p>
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Wk 39	<p>Check yard drainage and French drains</p> <p>Watch where water pools during the first heavy Olympia rains. Water that sits within 10 feet of your foundation can wick into crawl spaces and basements. Mark problem areas now and plan corrections — French drains or regrading — for spring.</p> <p>Outdoor Inspection</p>
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Wk 40	<p>Inspect crawl space vapor barrier</p> <p>Before winter rain loads arrive, inspect your crawl space one more time. Check for torn areas, standing water from autumn rains, and rodent activity. A proper vapor barrier — 6 mil poly covering all soil — is essential in Thurston County.</p> <p>Indoor Inspection</p>
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November

Fall

Wk 41

Have a power outage plan ready

Western WA outages peak November through February. Know where your flashlights, backup batteries, and portable heat source are. If you have a gas stove, it'll work without power. If you have a well, no power means no water — plan accordingly.

Indoor

Safety

Wk 42

Check for roof damage after first big storm

After the first major November storm, do a ground-level roof check with binoculars. Look for lifted or missing shingles, damaged flashing around the chimney or skylights, and any debris. Catch it before weeks of rain follow.

Outdoor

Inspection

Wk 43

Inspect bathroom exhaust fans

Turn on each bathroom fan and hold a piece of tissue up — it should be pulled toward the grille. A weak or noisy fan isn't removing moisture effectively. Olympia bathroom humidity is constant all winter; a dead fan leads to mold on ceilings.

Indoor

Inspection

Wk 44

Replace furnace filter

If you haven't replaced your HVAC filter since spring, now is the time. Heating season starts in earnest. A dirty filter makes your system work harder, reduces air quality, and can cause early motor failure. Most homes need a new filter every 60-90 days.

Indoor

December

Winter

Wk 45

Monitor for ice dams after cold snaps

Olympia occasionally gets freezes followed by warmer temps. Ice dams form when heat escapes the attic, melts roof snow, and refreezes at the cold eaves. Look for icicles on gutters and ice buildup at the roof edge after any freeze.

Outdoor

Inspection

Wk 46	<p>Check pipes near exterior walls in cold weather</p> <p>During any hard freeze, open cabinet doors under sinks on exterior walls to keep air circulating. Let faucets at the end of long runs drip slightly. Know where to wrap heat tape on exposed pipes — especially in older crawl spaces.</p> <p>Indoor Safety</p>
Wk 47	<p>Deep clean kitchen exhaust and range</p> <p>Year-end is a great time for this. Clean behind and under the range, degrease the hood interior, and check that the exhaust damper opens when the fan runs. Grease buildup is the most common cause of kitchen fires — and it accumulates invisibly.</p> <p>Indoor Safety</p>
Wk 48	<p>Review your home insurance policy</p> <p>Once a year, pull out your homeowner's policy and confirm coverage limits still match your home's value. First-time buyers often underinsure. Check whether you have sewer backup coverage — Olympia's older sewer systems back up during heavy rain events.</p> <p>Indoor</p>
Wk 49	<p>Walk the property after windstorms</p> <p>December brings Olympia's strongest windstorms. After each event, walk the full perimeter: check fencing, look for tree limbs near the house, confirm downspouts are still attached, and look for displaced roof shingles or ridge cap.</p> <p>Outdoor Inspection</p>
Wk 50	<p>Check exterior lighting</p> <p>Short December days mean more reliance on exterior lighting. Test all porch, path, and garage lights. Replace burned bulbs with LED equivalents — they last years and use a fraction of the electricity. Motion-sensor lighting adds security too.</p> <p>Outdoor Safety</p>
Wk 51	<p>Look for mold in bathrooms and laundry</p> <p>The combination of cold outside and hot showers inside makes December prime mold season. Check tile grout, caulk lines around tubs and showers, and ceiling corners. Clean with a diluted bleach solution and recaulk any cracked lines.</p> <p>Indoor Inspection</p>

Wk 52

Update your home maintenance log

Year-end is the perfect time to record every repair, replacement, and inspection from the past 12 months. Date, cost, and who did the work. This list adds real value at resale and keeps you ahead of deferred maintenance — the #1 killer of home equity.

Indoor

Quick Reference: Priority Tasks by Season

Winter (Jan–Feb)

- Locate and test your main water shutoff
- Test all smoke and CO detectors
- Inspect attic for condensation
- Check GFCI outlets

Spring (Mar–May)

- Inspect roof for moss — treat with zinc
- Carpenter ant perimeter treatment
- Flush water heater
- Check crawl space vapor barrier

Summer/Dry Season (Jun–Sept)

- Pressure wash and repaint exterior
- Apply deck stain or sealer
- Clean dryer vent duct
- Test sump pump — replace if over 8 years old

Fall (Oct–Nov)

- Winterize hose bibs before first freeze
- Final gutter clean before sustained rain
- Service furnace or heat pump
- Inspect crawl space one last time