



Fall home maintenance checklist

Fall has officially begun, and for many, it feels like there are still a million things left to do. Have no fear—our checklist will help you get your home ready for fall, so you can kick back, relax, and enjoy the winter months ahead.

STEP 1: Exterior fall maintenance

Now that fall is here, it's time to start thinking about ways to prepare your home for the colder months. One of the most important steps is to perform exterior maintenance tasks that can help keep your home in good condition and help you avoid costly and inconvenient repairs.

- Examine your home's foundation, exterior walls, and driveway** for cracks and openings that can cause more damage due to freeze or mold buildup; fill any cracks and openings with durable urethane caulk
- Clean your home's gutters** of leaves, twigs, and other debris; repair or replace any damaged or missing gutters or downspouts
- Inspect your roof** to locate and replace any damaged or missing shingles
- Clean and cover your pool**; be sure to replace your pool cover if it is damaged or worn
- Clean and cover outdoor furniture (including your grill)** or move these items into your shed or garage for safe keeping
- Inspect your home and vehicle emergency kits** to see what needs to be replaced, including batteries and over-the-counter medication
- Check doors, windows, and baseboards for drafts**; fill any drafts you locate with caulk or spray foam
- Cover A/C window units** or bring them inside for the season

Step 2: Prepare ahead for winter

Here are a few things you can do to get your home ready for the snowy season during the fall months.

- Put ice melt, snow shovels, and other snow and ice removal tools in an easily accessible place ahead of the first snow
- Make sure your home insurance policy is up to date in case a fall storm causes serious damage
- Check snow blowers and generators** to make sure they're functioning properly
- Add emergency and must-have fall staples to your grocery list**, such as bottled water, canned beans, baking ingredients, tea, and holiday supplies

STEP 3: Lawn and garden fall maintenance

Fall is a great time to take stock of your lawn and garden and make any necessary repairs or adjustments. Here are a few tips to help you get started.

- Inspect your lawn for patches of dead grass; reseed these areas as needed
- [Rake up leaves, twigs, and other debris](#) to help your lawn grow healthier when spring arrives
- Prune trees and shrubs as needed**; be sure to remove any dead branches
- Fertilize your lawn and garden** using a product that is made for the season
- Remove tree limbs** that hang near power lines, your roof, or over a space where cars are parked; these should be cut back to reduce the risk of damage during a storm
- Remove, drain, and store all garden hoses and watering equipment to prevent freezing damage
- Drain and winterize your sprinkler or irrigation system to prevent freezing damage
- Prep your lawn mower and other gas-powered equipment** for storage to prevent rust and damage that can occur over fall and winter

STEP 4: Interior fall maintenance

In addition to maintaining your home's exterior, here are a few things you can do to prepare for fall indoors, so you can enjoy the falling leaves and colder weather without worrying about your home.

- [Maintain your HVAC system and furnace](#) to ensure it's in good working condition
- [Replace your home air filters](#); if you have allergies, consider replacing your old filter with a HEPA filter
- [Inspect and clean your gas fireplace](#) or have it done by a professional before the winter season begins
- Reverse the direction of your ceiling fans** so they rotate clockwise, which helps push warm air down from the ceiling
- [Check your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors](#) to ensure they're working properly; replace any batteries that are low
- If you have hardwood floors, have them professionally cleaned and sealed to protect them from winter weather
- Clean your windows inside and out** to let in more light during the shorter days of fall
- Wash all bedding, curtains, and rugs** to get rid of any dust or allergens that have built up over the summer
- Organize your closets and drawers**; donate or sell any clothes that you no longer wear
- Dust each room from top to bottom**, including hard-to-reach places such as ceiling fans and baseboards

- ❑ **Clean and empty your fridge and freezer** of any expired food to prevent mold or bacteria buildup
- ❑ If you have an attic, make sure circulation is adequate and that none of the vents are blocked
- ❑ **Maintain your home humidifier** to keep indoor air comfortable and prevent fine wood from cracking

STEP 5: Enjoy your fall!

Now that your home is all squared away for fall, it's time to sit back and enjoy the season. Make a list of all the fun things you want to do this autumn, from visiting a pumpkin patch to baking pies. And don't forget to schedule some time for relaxing—after all, you've earned it!