

System: Household systems include appliances, windows, roofing, insulation, electric, heating, ventilation, air conditioning (HVAC), and other components.

Warranty Coverage (*Existing System*): Home warranties offer protection for mechanical systems (e.g., HVAC) and attached appliances against unexpected repairs not covered by homeowner's insurance. Homebuyers should ask previous homeowners about warranties on individual home appliances as well.

Age of Existing System: A previous homeowner or a home inspector may know or be able to estimate when the system was manufactured, installed, or purchased.

Life Expectancy of Existing System: Homeowners can refer to online resources to estimate life expectancy of household systems.

Upkeep Options: There are many proactive steps homeowners can take to prevent repairs from becoming necessary and to increase the life of a household system.

Estimated Cost (*New System*): Homeowners can purchase refurbished appliances to save money up front. Also, they can reduce their energy bills long term by choosing energy efficient appliances that have an ENERGY STAR label.

Repair/Replacement Strategy (*and financial goals*): Homeowners can fix and replace systems on their own or pay a contractor to do it. To learn how to do it themselves, they might attend free workshops at hardware stores and local nonprofits. Those who use a contractor may want to do research to find a reliable and reasonably priced contractor.

Target Replacement Date: When homeowners set a target replacement date for household systems, they can plan financially for the associated expenses.

HOME MAINTENANCE AND UPKEEP

What preventative maintenance should you be doing seasonally/annually to ensure that appliances and household systems are adequately cared for? Preventative maintenance can catch minor issues before they become major problems!

**** = professional needed**

SPRING

Yard and Exterior

- Clean gutters and downspouts (clear debris, ensure proper drainage away from house)
- Clean window wells and check drainage
- Check for signs of insect/rodent damage
- Check for loose shingles
- Check chimney, valley, plumbing vent, skylight flashing
- Check attic for signs of roof leaks
- Check for peeling paint
- Deck care
 - Look for signs of leaks where deck attaches to house
 - Check for loose deck boards
 - Repaint/reseal as necessary
- Check around windows and doors that flashing is intact
- Look for signs of leaks at window and door sills
- Clean dryer vent
- Check that exhaust ducts are clear
- Check for cracks in foundation, sidewalk, etc.
- Check for trip, fall, choking, sharp edge hazards
- Check for dead tree limbs

Basement and Crawlpace

- No wet surfaces/puddles, check floor drain
- Check sump pump and valves

Garage

- Ensure proper storage of fuel cans
- Proper operation of garage door safety sensor
- Check for signs of water damage
- Check for signs of insect/rodent damage

Interior Structures (Walls, ceilings, windows, doors)

- Check operation of windows and doors
- Clean window screens
- Check for signs of water damage
- Clear ceiling fans of dust and debris

Plumbing Fixtures and Appliances

- Check drain and supply lines for leaks, test shut-off valves
 - Water main
 - Washer
 - Dishwasher
 - Sinks
 - Toilets
 - Bath/shower
 - Outside spigots
 - Hot water heater
- Clean and check refrigerator drip pan/icemaker connections

Appliances

- Clean dryer vents and screens
- Clean exhaust fans and external outlets
- Clean oven/range, range hood
- Clean outdoor air intakes, AC coils, drain pans, etc.
- Clean dehumidifier coils, check operation
- Vacuum dust/debris from refrigerator coils
- Clean dishwasher filter
- Check washer filter

Attic

- Check for water damage
- Check for signs of rodents, bats, roaches, termites

HVAC Equipment

- Service before use**
 - Air conditioner/heat pump
- Clean AC/mini split filters, replace as necessary—*clean every 2 weeks*

Electrical Equipment

- Check smoke detectors/CO alarms
- Check fire extinguishers
- Check for damaged cords
- Test GFCI outlets
- Test outlets for proper hot, neutral, ground

FALL

Yard and Exterior

- Clean gutters and downspouts (clear leaves and debris, ensure proper drainage away from house)
- Clean window wells and check drainage
- Check for signs of insect/rodent damage
- Check for loose shingles
- Check chimney, valley, plumbing vent, skylight flashing
- Check attic for signs of roof leaks
- Check around windows and doors that flashing is intact
- Look for signs of leaks at window and door sills
- Clean dryer vent
- Check that exhaust ducts are clear
- Check for cracks in foundation, sidewalk, etc.
- Check for trip, fall, choking, sharp edge hazards
- Check for dead tree limbs
- PRE-WINTER:** drain outdoor faucets and hoses
- WINTER:** check for icicles and ice dams

Basement and Crawlpace

- No wet surfaces/puddles, check floor drain
- Check sump pump and valves
- Vacuum basement surfaces
- Check for signs of insect/rodent damage

Garage

- Ensure proper storage of fuel cans
- Proper operation of garage door safety sensor
- Check for signs of water damage
- Check for signs of insect/rodent damage

Interior Structures (Walls, ceilings, windows, doors)

- Check operation of windows and doors
- Check for signs of water damage
- Lubricate doors and windows when necessary

Plumbing Fixtures and Appliances

- Check drain and supply lines for leaks, test shut-off valves
 - Water main
 - Washer
 - Dishwasher
 - Sinks
 - Toilets
 - Bath/shower
 - Outside spigots
 - Hot water heater
- Clean and check refrigerator drip pan/icemaker connections

Appliances

- Clean dryer vents and screens
- Clean exhaust fans and external outlets
- Clean oven/range, range hood
- Clean outdoor air intakes, AC coils, drain pans, etc.
- Clean dehumidifier coils, check operation
- Vacuum dust/debris from refrigerator coils
- Clean dishwasher filter
- Clean washer filter

Attic

- Check for water damage
- Check for signs of rodents, bats, roaches, termites
- Check ductwork connections for exhaust fans

HVAC Equipment

- Service before use**
 - Fireplace
 - Furnace/Boiler
 - Heat pump
 - Mini Split
- Clean AC/mini split filters, replace as necessary—*clean every 2 weeks*

Electrical Equipment

- Check for damaged cords
- Check smoke detectors/CO alarms
- Check fire extinguishers

ENERGY EFFICIENCY UPDATES/MAINTENANCE

Lower your energy usage, save money, and maximize efficiency and lifespan of appliances

Visit www.energy.gov/energysaver for more tips and information

- Replace old lightbulbs with LED bulbs
- Turn off lights and electronics when not in use
- Install a programmable thermostat
 - Adjust temperature in rooms less frequently utilized
 - Adjust temperature at night and when away
- Install a low-flow shower head
- Install a low-flow toilet
- Clean air filters regularly
- Reduce temperature on water heater
- Add insulation to basement, attic, walls, hot water pipes
- Seal air leaks in basement and attic, and around doors and windows
- Install ENERGY STAR qualified appliances and systems when updating
 - Your electric provider may offer rebates for energy updates*