

10 Great Things To Do

When You Move Into Your New Home



Congratulations! You've purchased a new home and are all moved in! There's been a lot to take care of, like emptying boxes, loading up cabinets and drawers, and maybe even painting and decorating, but here are 10 around-the-house tasks you may not have thought of that are essential to starting things off on the right foot when it comes to caring for your new home.

The secret to a well maintained home is to start your maintenance early—*ahem*—that means now. But, don't get nervous. It's not all work, work, work. Doing your home maintenance bit by bit is a great way to accomplish it all, but over time so that there's plenty of room for relaxing too. Additionally, preventative maintenance *now*, will reduce the likelihood of unwelcome (many times costly) surprises down the road.

Here are ten great things to do around the house when you first move in!

1. **Change the locks.** reprogram garage door opener codes, and check that all window locks operate. If there's a security system, learn how it operates and sign up for any maintenance or monitoring plans that yours requires.
2. **Locate emergency shut offs.** Know how to shut off the power, water, and gas in your home. Also, know the location of your main and any sub electrical panel boxes.
3. **Create a "fix it" kit.** Buy a toolbox and stock it with frequently-used tools and supplies. Tip: Include a small first aid kit within your toolbox—that way, if injuries do occur, you won't have to go far in order to properly tend to them.
4. **Service smoke alarms and CO monitors.** Both devices require fresh batteries twice annually (don't forget electric detectors with battery back-up) and *full replacement* regularly. (Smoke alarms, min every 8-10 years, CO monitors min every 5 years).
5. **Perform necessary seasonal maintenance.** Winter, spring, summer, or fall, there are tasks around the home that when completed, help the whole season run more smoothly. Utilize resources like usinspect.com to get your checklists, and be off to a great start no matter what time of year you move.
6. **Change filters in your HVAC system.** This will not only help clear out all the dust that's been kicked up during the move, but a clean filter also helps your system function more efficiently and extends its lifespan.
7. **Check pilot lights.** Check pilot lights on stove, water heater, gas fireplace, and furnace.
8. **Be sure hazardous items are stowed away** safely (that includes cans of paint). Flammable substances should be kept away from pilot lights, stoves, or water heaters (don't forget gas dryers). Also, be sure that you have identified any substances left behind by the previous owner.
9. **Learn how to operate and properly maintain any items in the home that are new to you** like appliances, fireplaces, the septic tank, garbage disposal, hot tub, etc. You may be unaware of vitally important operation or care instructions that are necessary for proper function and safety. If you don't have manufacturer owner's manuals, look them up. Virtually any product manual out there can be downloaded right from the Internet.
10. **Address the items mentioned in your home inspection report.** You may have already addressed the big issues, but did your inspector mention any necessary maintenance or smaller repairs that would be necessary upon moving in? That's now! Remember that proactively caring for your home with maintenance and service is the primary way to prevent unwelcome surprises down the road. Reread your report and don't hesitate to call your inspector to clarify his recommendations or to answer any questions you may have.