



good news is that you can do the majority of it on your own without much experience. Google is your best friend, and if you really get stuck, call up your local handyman to help you out.

In order to maximize your efficiency and actually get all of these tasks done, you might want to create a home maintenance calendar for yourself. Whether online or on paper, you can jot down small, regular tasks for each weekend and not be too overwhelmed. We've listed tasks that need to be done monthly, quarterly, and biannually. We've also given you a list of tasks to be completed seasonally. Not every expert agrees as to which task needs to be done in which season, so this isn't a black and white list, necessarily. Do what works for you and your schedule, and as long as all these things get accomplished, your home will be happy for years and years to come.

## Monthly

- **Inspect, and possibly change out HVAC filters.** Many experts will say to change the filters monthly, but that's not always necessary. For smaller families without pets or allergies, you'll likely be okay changing the filters every 2-3 months. If the filter is dirty, change it out, otherwise inspect it again next month. I've also been told by handymen to go with cheaper filters and replace them more often versus going with the expensive filters.
- **Clean kitchen sink disposal.** There are a bunch of ways to do this, but the handiest and best all-around solution seems to be

vinegar ice cubes. Put some vinegar in an ice tray and let it freeze, then run the ice cubes through the disposal. It freshens it, but as a bonus, ice sharpens the blades. You're welcome.

- **Clean range hood filters.** If you've never thought of doing this, you're in for a real "treat" when you get that filter off the hood to clean it for the first time. The [Family Handyman](#) suggests simply using a degreaser from an auto parts store mixed with hot water. Let the filter sit for a few minutes, rinse it off, and you're good to go.
- **Inspect your fire extinguisher(s).** We'll assume you have and [know how to use an extinguisher](#). This inspection doesn't require much: ensure it has easy access (not being blocked by a garbage can or anything else), that the gauge shows adequate pressure, and that it has no visible signs of wear and tear.

## Quarterly

- **Test smoke/carbon dioxide detectors.** Another simple task; your detectors should have a "test" button. If the alarm sounds, you're good to go. If not, replace batteries immediately and test again. If it still doesn't sound, it's possible there's simply corrosion on the battery terminal, and it won't detect new batteries. Clean it and try again. If it still doesn't work, you'll likely need a new detector.
- **Test garage door auto-reverse feature.** In 1993, federal law required all garage doors to have this feature after multiple child deaths. Test every month by placing a 2×4 on the ground where the

door would close. It should reverse after a second or so when the door hits the wood. Also test the photo-electric sensors if you have them by placing something in front of them (not your body). If the door doesn't immediately go back up, you have a problem.

- **Run water and flush toilets in unused spaces.** This mostly applies to guest bathrooms, or any other sinks/water sources you don't use on a regular basis. The idea is to prevent grime or any other kind of build up. Regularly running a little bit of water through will prevent this.
- **Check water softener, add salt if needed.** You shouldn't need to add salt every month, but better to check anyway, as it only takes about 5 seconds.

## Biannually

- **Test your water heater's pressure relief valve.** This will prevent mineral and corrosion buildup, which safeguards against leaks. It will also help your heater run more efficiently.
- **Give your house a deep clean.** Take one Saturday every six months with your whole family, and give the whole house a proper deep clean. Appliances, windows, dusting every nook and cranny (including the basement), etc. Keeping things clean and not letting dirt/grime/dust build up over years and years will help keep your home in tip-top shape.
- **Replace batteries in smoke/carbon dioxide detectors.** I'd never heard this before, actually. I just assumed you changed it out when













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