

caring
for those
you care about

Seasonal Tasks Around the House

There are many things to do throughout the year to prepare your house for each season. Using this handy list of household chores will help you keep your house safe and sound all year long.

Spring

- Clean windows.
- Replace storm windows with screens.
- Change batteries in smoke detectors.
- Inspect house for fire hazards, such as overloaded extension cords.
- Check or install carbon monoxide detectors.
- Make sure all exits and hallways are clear.
- Clean yard, driveway, patios, porches, decks, and walkways.
- Clean out garage, shed, or carport.
- Clean basement and attic.
- Make sure all indoor and outdoor stairs are slip-proof, well-lit, and in good condition.

- Fix broken or uneven pavement on stairs, walkways, patios, or in driveways.
- Inspect roof for leaks, loose shingles, or debris.
- Check indoors and outside for signs of pests, such as termites or rodents.
- Fix broken doors, gates, and fences.
- Clean and inspect gutters.
- Attend to any other general maintenance:
 - Repair it; if it's broken.
 - Fix it; if it's peeling.
 - Patch it; if it's leaking.
 - Seal it; if it's squeaking.
 - Oil it; if it's falling down.
 - Pick it up.

Summer

- Mow the lawn and trim bushes.
- Remove trees or large branches that may fall on the house.

Seasonal Tasks **Around the House**

- Install air conditioner or have central air system inspected.
- Check all door locks and doorknobs to be sure they're in good working order.
- Install deadbolts on doors if you don't have them.
- Check home security system or consider installing one.
- Check screens in doors and windows and repair/replace as needed.
- Check all outside lights, and replace bulbs as needed.
- Clean outdoor lawn furniture.
- Check garden hoses for leaks, replace as necessary.


Fall

- Rake leaves.
- Clean and inspect gutters.
- Weatherize house for winter — including attic and basement — with insulation, weather stripping, caulk, plaster, or replacement windows.
- Check and clean furnace and replace air filters.
- Store lawn furniture, ornaments, hoses, planters, and other outdoor items for winter.
- Buy and store salt, sand, snow shovel, and snow blower.
- Create and store an emergency survival kit for bad weather — include flashlights, batteries, candles, water, and packaged food that won't spoil.

- Inspect and clean fireplace and chimneys, and stock up on firewood.
- Change screens to storm windows, and remove and clean air conditioning units.
- Fill oil or propane tanks.
- Keep walkways, pathways and driveway clear of leaves.

Winter

- Keep walkways and driveways clear of snow and ice.
- Put a blanket, shovel, sand and first-aid kit in your car.
- Stock up on canned goods and household items, including light bulbs and batteries.
- Check for proper lighting inside and outside the house.
- Check all holiday lights and decorations to be sure they are in good working order.
- Make sure space heaters work properly.
- Drain water from outdoor faucets and hoses.
- Buy heat tape to keep pipes from freezing during extremely cold weather.
- Check water filter, and change as needed.
- Restock salt and sand, as needed.
- Check sinks, tubs, and toilets for leaks in the faucet or tank.



Taking care of your house throughout the year is the best way to keep it safe and cozy through all seasons. If you don't have the time or experience to do everything on your list, consider getting help. Neighborhood kids are often willing to rake leaves, mow the lawn, or shovel snow to earn money. You also can ask family members to lend a hand.

If you need professional services, such as tree removal or pest control, ask friends and neighbors for referrals. Get two or three estimates before you hire someone and make sure the person or company is licensed and insured.

Proper care of your home will not only protect your investment, it will help you avoid major problems and repairs down the road.

AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan membership organization that helps people 50+ have independence, choice and control in ways that are beneficial and affordable to them and society as a whole. We produce *AARP The Magazine*, published bimonthly; *AARP Bulletin*, our monthly newspaper; *AARP Segunda Juventud*, our bimonthly magazine in Spanish and English; *NRTA Live & Learn*, our quarterly newsletter for 50+ educators; and our website, AARP.org. AARP Foundation is an affiliated charity that provides security, protection, and empowerment to older persons in need with support from thousands of volunteers, donors, and sponsors. We have staffed offices in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.



601 E Street, NW
Washington, DC 20049
www.aarp.org

© 2003, 2004, 2007 AARP. Reprinting by permission only.