

January Home Maintenance and Safety Checklist



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Now that the holidays are over, you might be left thinking, “Now what?”

Aside from the obvious—retiring the light-up reindeer and salting your sidewalk to avoid unintentional triple axels—January is perfect for a little pre-spring cleaning and careful inspection of your home.

To help simplify the process, we created a January Home Maintenance Checklist. It will guide you through preventive maintenance tasks to make your home a safer, healthier place for you and your family in the new year.

January home maintenance checklist

1. [Clean the kitchen](#)
2. [Get organized](#)
3. [Do house maintenance](#)
4. [Inspect bathrooms](#)
5. [Prepare for emergencies](#)
6. [Upgrade outside](#)
7. [Keep your devices running smoothly](#)

1. Clean the kitchen

If you've been hosting holiday events, your kitchen has logged some overtime. Maybe it's time to give it (and yourself) a break and order some takeout.

Before you cozy up on the couch, clean these parts of your kitchen so it's fresh and well-functioning when you decide to pick up a spatula again.

Check your range hood filter

Now that the busy season is over for your kitchen, it's a good time to clean your range-hood filter in boiling water and baking soda. This not only rids your filter of ickiness—it helps keep your kitchen air pure. If the grease is too stubborn to clean, opt for a [new filter](#) instead.

Clean your cooling coils

Refrigerator coils are dust bunny magnets. Boost your fridge's [energy efficiency](#) by vacuuming the coils regularly.

Double-duty cleaning brush

You can use a [flexible vent cleaning brush](#) for cleaning both your refrigerator coils and your dryer vent.

2. Get organized

Now that the holidays are over, your bedroom and shared spaces deserve some TLC. Time to make your environment conducive to all the ambitious New Year's resolutions you have your eye on.

Create a home inventory

Make a list of the items you'd want your [insurance company](#) to know about if, heaven forbid, you lost your home in a fire or flood. Don't forget to add any big-ticket items you got over the holidays.

Update home files

Gather up all those instruction manuals and warranties and slip them into a single file. But first, check if the instruction manuals are available online—you may be able to chuck the physical copy. While you're organizing, start a file for all the income tax paperwork you're getting in the mail.

Pack away decorations

You'll thank yourself next year if you take the time to coil your lights carefully and pack ornaments securely so nothing gets broken.

DIY ornament storage system

For an easy DIY ornament storage system, cut a piece of cardboard so it can lie flat in the bottom of a plastic tub. Glue plastic cups to the cardboard and place ornaments inside and around each cup. Place a second layer of cardboard and plastic cups on top of the first for another layer of storage.

Declutter closets

If that blue sweater got eaten by the dog, how would you feel? If you wouldn't be devastated, then let it go. Start off your new year with some breathing room by dropping the dead weight of unused items.

Check batteries

Winter storms can bring power outages, so it's a good idea to check batteries and bulbs in flashlights, weather radios, and other [emergency gear](#).

Restock your [battery supply](#) so you've got plenty of replacements throughout the year.

3. Do house maintenance

Inspect pipes

Hopefully you've already bundled up your water pipes with pipe insulation, but it's still a good idea to check them for [cracks and fractures](#) throughout the winter. [Catching a leak](#) before it happens can save you from costly water damage.

Clean filters and vents

If you didn't change your furnace filter as part of your [December Home Maintenance Checklist](#), now is the time. Clear debris from your [dryer vents](#) and other air vents so you can [breathe easy](#).

Inspect house structure

While you're poking around in your attic and basement, grab a flashlight and inspect exposed beams, foundations, and your chimney for cracks, leaks, mold, and damage from pests.

Add insulation

If your attic insulation is less than 12" deep, it's time to [contact a professional](#) to add more. Keeping your home well-insulated can [lower your energy bills](#).

4. Inspect bathrooms

Your bathrooms need some love this month too—make sure to replenish medical supplies and ward off water damage.

Replenish medical supplies

Add more bandages, burn cream, and antiseptic to your [first aid kit](#) to make up for all the holiday injuries you doctored in December. Keep plenty of cold and cough medicine and vitamin C on hand to prep for flu season.

Run water in unused spaces

It's a good idea to flush toilets and run water in unused bathrooms to [prevent frozen pipes](#) and hard water stains.

Check for mold

When it's chilly outside, we don't usually use bathroom windows to vent steam, and that can lead to moisture buildup. [Check for black mold](#) and make sure your bathroom vent fans are working correctly.

5. Prepare for emergencies

Don't forget to test and inspect the safety devices standing at the ready in your hallways.

Test smoke and carbon monoxide detectors

Ensure that these [life-saving devices](#) are functional, and change batteries if necessary.

Check fire extinguishers

Our pick



Amerex B402 Fire Extinguisher

Firefighter recommended
Reliable
Rechargeable

Speaking of fires, confirm that your emergency [fire extinguishers](#) are still charged. If the needle on the pressure gauge is in the green, you're all set. Otherwise, get it recharged.

Review your emergency plan

Make sure your family knows what the alarms on the smoke detectors sound like and [what to do in case of a fire](#). Practice!

6. Upgrade outside

Check off these January to-dos for the outside of your home. These tasks protect your home exterior so you can feel safe inside.

Replace light bulbs

During this dark time of year, it's important to have working [outdoor lights](#) for your safety and home security. Replace any burnt-out bulbs.

Start researching security cameras

Smart homeowners start planning ahead for the summer burglary season by researching [home security systems](#) and surveillance cameras during the winter.

Clear your gutters

Clear gutters of leaves, debris, ice dams, and icicles to prevent damage to your roof and siding. [Use a roof rake](#) to [clean snow off your roof](#) and trees.

7. Keep your devices running smoothly

Once a month there are a few things you need to do to keep all of the devices around your home running smoothly and safely. The first of each month is a perfect time to do a quick checkup.

Review the list of devices connected to your Wi-Fi

To make sure that someone else isn't [using your Wi-Fi](#) and sucking up your precious bandwidth, check the list of devices that are connected to it. For most routers this is as easy as logging into its online dashboard. Make sure to delete any devices you don't recognize.

Reset the Wi-Fi password

Changing the Wi-Fi password every month may be a hassle, but it is a good way to prevent others from hacking into your network and potentially stealing your personal information.

Run a check on your devices

Once a month you should also check on the devices around your home and make sure they're functioning properly:

- Update apps.
- Run the test mode on your [security system's control panel](#) to work out bugs.
- Check the status of [medical alert devices](#).
- Make sure fire detectors are working.
- Clean off security camera lenses.