



5 Home Maintenance Projects To Do Each Year

If you don't keep up with these five maintenance projects, you may have a bigger problem on your hands down the road.

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Owning a home comes with the price of also maintaining it on your own or making the decision to hire professionals. While it may seem like annoying extra costs, in the long run, a well-maintained home will end up costing you less than paying for bigger repairs. These are five projects that every homeowner should be doing each year to keep their home in top shape.

1. **Furnace upkeep.** A very important project for your annual home maintenance list is to change the filters in your furnace and get a professional to clean or service it per their recommendation. David Itah, principal at [Indigo Remodeling](#) explains why this should be at the top of your list, “The quality of the air and the life expectancy of the unit itself depends on

regular maintenance. It will die sooner and it will cost you a lot of money to replace if you need to do so.”

2. Repair grout and caulking. Whether it is in the kitchen or in your bathrooms, this is a project that should be done as needed and potentially more often, but a yearly check can help you determine if you need to do any repairs. You may have chosen your grout for style purposes, but really it is there to seal any cracks from the floor or wall tiles and prevent moisture from getting through. Fixing it on a regular basis will avoid water damage in your home, which will save you a headache later on.

“You need to stay on top of caulking repairs and make sure that you do it at least once a year. It will prevent mold from getting behind the tiles and into the walls, which will cause further water problems or the need to tear up all of the tiles,” said Matt Laricy, [real estate broker at Americorp Real Estate](#).

3. Clean out your gutters. Before those spring showers take over, any downspouts or gutters on your home should be cleared out. The good news--this is something most homeowners can do themselves. Remove any large debris first with your hands and then rinse out smaller materials with a hose and working your way from top to bottom. While rinsing, watch for leaks and seal with gutter caulk to keep things flowing smoothly through gutters before your next round of cleaning.

“This is a very important project with houses. If you leave the gutters clogged, they can fall down from all of the leaves and it will lessen the lifespan of your roof. Cleaning them can avoid a flood in the basement, water seeping into the foundation and leaks getting into the ceiling,” said Laricy.

4. Inspect and clean the dryer vent. There are tons of house fires each year simply from lint build up from dryers and improper homeowner maintenance. Cleaning and unclogging the external vent to your home once a year is necessary in addition to cleaning out the dryer’s lint trap after each use. By not cleaning out this vent, the dryer will take a lot more heat to dry your clothes, which will also cause your utility bill to be extremely high. Simply remove the cover and use a lint brush.

Laricy explained that this is a common item that comes up during inspections, “It’s something you need to clean out and it only takes a second to do. Not cleaning out the vent will lessen the lifespan of your washer and dryer in addition to causing a potential house fire.”

5. Check your sewer line. While you may be safe waiting longer than a year before having it checked, you will want to make sure you don’t have any cracks in your sewer line. Itah explained, “This is a common issue that no one wants to deal with. Water not draining or water damage is one of the worst types of damage.” Find out where your sewer line is in your home to see where you should check and if you don’t trust yourself to check this out yourself, you can always hire a professional.