



Homeowner Maintenance Tips

Maintaining your home should be something you address year-round! Here is a quick checklist of items you should be addressing around your home every season (or quarterly) and at least twice a year.

Seasonal Maintenance Items

- replace air conditioning filter (every month)
- inspect yard drains (every month)
- inspect and repair caulking to seal out water
- inspect and repair paint
- clean gutters
- adjust sprinkler system
- Inspect cedar shake and shingles
- Inspect roof shingles
- inspect deck hand rails and balusters
- inspect and seal tile
- check dryer vent and foil duct opening for buildup
- inspect washing machine hot/cold and hose connections (replace every 2 years).

Annual Maintenance Items

- pressure wash house deck and flatwork
- inspect and clean condensate lines for your cooling system
- Inspect out side air conditioning unit
- have professional service water heater tank
- seal deck (new decks must cure for 6 months before first sealing)
- inspect chimney and shroud
- inspect foundation drain openings, keep them free of debris and obstructions
- inspect site drainage and maintain swales around your home
- drain sprinkler systems
- shut off hose bibs
- lubricate and inspect garage doors
- inspect furnace
- replace thermostat batteries
- replace smoke detector batteries (twice a year)
- check cook vent filter and clean aluminum vent screen at least twice a year.
- seal countertops
- tighten cabinet hinges
- clean chimney flue
- inspect thresholds and weather strip
- prune trees and shrubs
- fertilize, lime and aerate lawn



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Winterizing Your Home

It's time to think about winterizing your house, no matter whether you'll be there all winter or plan to be away for an extended period. Don't panic, the tasks aren't overwhelming when you prepare for winter one step at a time!

Heating System Checks

- Have a heating professional do a routine-check before cold weather arrives.
- Vacuum vents and other heating components.
- Replace the furnace filter. Make future replacements as needed or directed by your furnace manufacturer.
- Reprogram your thermostat settings for winter. This includes setting the clock back to standard time.
- Try not to set your thermostat higher than 72° F when you're at home. Lower your thermostat to 65° F when you're sleeping or away from home.
- If your thermostat uses batteries, now may be the time to replace them.

Seal Around Doors and Windows

- Add or replace worn weather-stripping around doors and windows.
- Caulk gaps where necessary.
- Replace worn door sweeps at the bottom of doors.
- Don't forget to winterize basement windows.
- Use caulking and weather-stripping around entry points for all pipes and ducts that travel through an exterior wall.

Check the Fireplace

- Have the chimney inspected and cleaned.
- If you're not using your fireplace, keep the damper airtight to keep warm air from escaping your home.

Check the Roof

- Replace loose shingles.
- Make sure the flashing around the chimney or vent pipes is watertight.
- Check the bricks and mortar.
- Clean gutters and point downspouts away from the house.
- Trim tree limbs that are hanging over or touching the roof.

Winterize the Plumbing

- Take care of known issues with pipes that freeze. Heat tape can be used to keep them warm during extremely cold weather.
- Learn how to turn off water at its source so that you can stop leaks immediately if they start.
- Drain water from outdoor faucets and sprinklers.

Winterizing Outdoor Items

- Give decks an additional coat of sealer.
- Check the foundation and siding for cracks or gaps. Repair as necessary.
- Drain garden hoses, roll them up, and store them inside.
- Prune shrubbery and add mulch to perennial flowerbeds.



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Driveway and exterior concrete

Your driveway and exterior concrete need to be sealed once they have cured. The curing process can take anywhere from 30 to 90 days depending on weather. Sometime within the first 6 months of ownership you should seal your driveway and concrete to get the best performance out of it.

When Do I Water My Lawn?

Beautiful yards take a lot less water than you think. In fact, more Mississippi lawns are damaged each year from over-watering than they are from lack of water. When you use water wisely, you can provide your lawns and landscape plants with the water they need, even during the hottest part of the summer. It just takes some **common sense and watering know-how**. Read on to learn how to water your landscape wisely.

One of two of the most commonly asked questions during the summer months is, “**How often do I need to water my yard?**” This is definitely an open-ended question with several factors determining the answer. Namely, how much rain has your yard received and how much? Localized rain should be sufficient to penetrate the soil to a depth of 4-5 inches. Water penetration depends primarily on your individual soil type. Grass can suffer from too much or too little water. Watering should be uniformly spread across the lawn to insure an even saturation. An easy trick to determine your sprinklers output and distribution pattern, is to place old coffee cans in different locations throughout your lawn. Water until you reach a 1” depth in the coffee can, and then turn off the sprinkler system. Check each can that you have put out to make sure you are reaching all areas of your yard.

It is best to water your lawn early morning while the morning dew is still on the ground. This will help to slow the water loss due to evaporation and insure better water saturation. It also prevents the possibility of scorching the grass during the mid-day heat. Watering during mid-day reduces the useable amount of water that can reach the grass roots. And watering your lawn late evening can cause excess moisture retention and lead to fungus buildup in the turf. It’s also best to keep your watering to those times of the year when temperatures are above 60 degrees at night and above 80 degrees during the daytime hours. **Water as infrequently as possible**. Thoroughly water when you do water so moisture soaks down to the roots. Exceptions to this general rule would be for newly seeded lawns where the surface needs to stay moist, newly sodded lawns that have not yet rooted into the soil, or when summer patch disease is a problem. Otherwise, avoid frequent watering, which promotes shallower root systems and weeds.

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