



Congratulations on your new home! Now, let's keep it going.

Home maintenance tips

You will need to perform routine maintenance on the inside and outside of your house. Regular maintenance helps you control energy costs and avoid expensive repairs in the future. It also helps maintain the value of your most important investment – your home.

Depending on the age, location, and condition of a home, typical items that will need repair or replacement over time may include:

- Roof
- Refrigerator
- Dishwasher
- Furnace
- Air conditioner
- Windows
- Gutters
- Fencing
- Water heater
- Washing machine/dryer
- Deck
- Garage door

When you do have to perform a major repair, follow these tips on hiring the right contractor:

- Interview several contractors. Find one that listens to you and with whom you feel comfortable working.
- Ask for references.
- Get cost estimates. Find out whether these are estimates or a firm bid.
- To protect yourself, be sure you have a contract that specifies exactly what work is to be performed, when payments are due, and when the work will be completed.
- Always hold back part of the payment until the job is finished.
- Does the job require building permits? If so, who is responsible for obtaining them? Will the work need to be inspected?
- Make sure to retain your receipts of work performed.

To avoid unexpected expenses, start a maintenance savings account now. It's a lot easier to move \$25 out of your checking account into a savings account each month, than figuring out how you are going to come up with \$500 on the spot when the dish washer stops working.

For additional maintenance cost information, visit

<http://www.zillow.com/blog/dont-ignore-home-repairs-155697/>

