

Spring Home Maintenance Tips

Spring is the opportune time to do some preventative maintenance around your house to prepare for the summer. For some helpful home maintenance reminders read on.

- Schedule an appointment with your HVAC contractor before they get booked up. You want to ensure that your AC is in good working condition before the weather gets hot.
- Inspect your attic for leaks, mould, that the insulation is intact, and no critters have taken up residence over the winter.
- If your property is equipped with a sump pump, test to ensure that it is working properly.
- Inspect the basement or foundation for cracks and look for mould and leaks around windows.
- Have your roof inspected for missing shingles, tiles, or holes.
- Clean gutters and downspouts and patch holes in your gutters if necessary.
- Assess the outside foundation and exterior walls of your property for cracks or damage.



- If you have a chimney, check for damage or blockages.
- Check seals around windows and doors and re-seal if necessary to prevent water damage and reduce your energy costs.
- Clean screens and replace or repair them if damaged.
- Check fences and decks for wear and tear.
- If you have a barbecue, refill or replace the propane tank if necessary.
- Stock up on yard waste bags.

Remember regular preventive maintenance will help maintain the value of your home and nip small problems in the bud before they become big, expensive problems.



Planting the Seeds of a Garden

March brings the first day of spring... the perfect time to plan for a new garden, which can be both exciting and overwhelming. So, where do you begin?

First, consider **how many hours of sunlight exposure** your garden area gets and check a **hardiness zone** map to know which plants will thrive best. For a low-maintenance garden, perennials are great since you don't have to re-plant them. Choose a variety of plants that bloom at different times, so you **always have something colourful** in your garden.

Next, **measure the space** to know what and how much you can plant. Make sure the soil is conducive for optimum growth and supplement with appropriate nutrients as needed.

Consider including **hardscape materials**, such as stones, rocks, wood, or fountains for visual interest.

Once you have weighed all these factors, **map your garden on paper**. Choose a few plants of **different heights with a complementary colour scheme** to start. Plants **en masse** tend to look better than a scattered jumble of different types.

Happy gardening!

Making Your Home Eco-Friendly

On March 22nd, the world will mark Earth Hour, an hour to turn off your lights and acknowledge the effects of climate change. What better time for some changes around your home that can make a positive impact every day, such as:

- Switch to LED light bulbs, which use less energy and last longer than other light bulbs.
- Use natural and eco-friendly cleaning products.
- Wash with cold water. Hot water cycles use about 75 percent more energy by heating the water.
- Install low-flow plumbing fixtures. A low-flow toilet can reduce water usage by 20 to 60 percent annually.
- Install ceiling fans to circulate air and reduce AC usage.
- Invest in a smart thermostat and lights so you can control them from your phone and reduce usage.
- Use a water filtration system instead of plastic water bottles.
- Other changes that are pricier upfront, but ultimately save you more on your energy bill include investing in energy-efficient windows and appliances, switching to a heat pump, and installing solar panels.

A recent survey found one-third of millennials and Gen Z home



buyers prioritize homes with eco-friendly features. While you may not be looking to sell, there are immediate cost-saving benefits and possibly rebates with some relatively simple changes around your home.