

Take better care of the home you already own.

A practical, printable field guide for maintenance, security, savings, preparedness, improvements, and the records that make ownership easier.



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MAINTAIN

Keep small issues small.

PROTECT

Build safer habits.

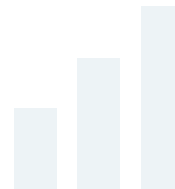
PLAN

Make informed improvements.

Prepared for homeowners across Sacramento, El Dorado, and Placer Counties. Keep this guide with your home records.

02 | WINTER

Winter: a focused home reset.



Keep the home warm, dry, and ready for freezing nights.

Winter maintenance checklist

- ☐ Service the furnace or heat pump; replace filters and check vents.
- ☐ Replace batteries in smoke and carbon-monoxide detectors; test every alarm.
- ☐ Inspect weatherstripping around exterior doors and windows.
- ☐ Protect exposed pipes and know where the main water shutoff is.
- ☐ Clear roof valleys, gutters, and downspouts so winter rain drains away.
- ☐ Check fireplaces, chimneys, and space heaters before use.
- ☐ Keep flashlights, batteries, blankets, and emergency supplies accessible.

LOOK CLOSELY

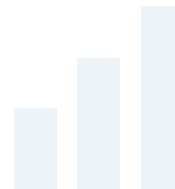
Use the season as a prompt to notice water, air, safety, and comfort changes before they become urgent.

KEEP THE RECORD

Write down what you checked, what you changed, and which professional or warranty to contact next.

03 | SPRING

Spring: a focused home reset.



Inspect outside after winter and stop small moisture issues early.

Spring maintenance checklist

- [] Walk the roofline, flashing, vents, siding, and foundation from the ground.
- [] Clean gutters and downspouts; confirm water flows away from the foundation.
- [] Test irrigation, hose bibs, drainage, and grading before watering increases.
- [] Service air conditioning; replace filters and clear debris around the outdoor unit.
- [] Look for termites, dry rot, standing water, and damaged screens or seals.
- [] Wash windows, inspect screens, and trim branches away from the roof.
- [] Update your home photo record and schedule repairs before summer heat.

LOOK CLOSELY

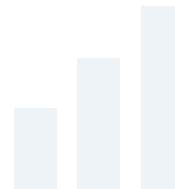
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04 | SUMMER

Summer: a focused home reset.



Manage heat, water use, wildfire exposure, and outdoor living.

Summer maintenance checklist

- [] Check attic ventilation, ceiling fans, shade structures, and weather seals.
- [] Replace smoke and carbon-monoxide detector batteries if they are due; test alarms.
- [] Set irrigation for early morning, inspect leaks, and watch the water bill for changes.
- [] Clean dryer vents, refrigerator coils, and HVAC filters for efficient cooling.
- [] Inspect decks, fences, play areas, pools, and outdoor electrical equipment.
- [] Clear dry leaves and brush away from structures; review wildfire readiness.
- [] Plan larger exterior work for cooler weather and keep permits and receipts.

LOOK CLOSELY

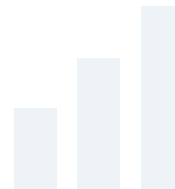
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05 | FALL

Fall: a focused home reset.



Prepare for rain, shorter days, and the next heating season.

Fall maintenance checklist

- ☐ Clean leaves from gutters, roof valleys, drains, and window wells.
- ☐ Service the furnace or heat pump; replace filters and confirm vents are open.
- ☐ Replace batteries in smoke and carbon-monoxide detectors; test every alarm.
- ☐ Inspect weatherstripping, caulk, roof penetrations, and exterior paint.
- ☐ Trim branches, secure outdoor furniture, and store hoses before storms.
- ☐ Review emergency contacts, shutoff locations, flashlights, and backup supplies.
- ☐ Photograph improvements and record service dates before the year closes.

LOOK CLOSELY

Use the season as a prompt to notice water, air, safety, and comfort changes before they become urgent.

KEEP THE RECORD

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06 | MAINTENANCE

Keep the systems that keep the home comfortable.

Regular maintenance is less about perfection and more about noticing changes early. If something looks unsafe or unfamiliar, stop and call a qualified professional.

Seasonal maintenance checklist

- ☐ Replace or clean HVAC filters; confirm supply and return vents are open.
- ☐ Test smoke and carbon-monoxide alarms and replace batteries as needed.
- ☐ Inspect roof surfaces, flashing, vents, gutters, and downspouts from the ground.
- ☐ Look under sinks, around toilets, near the water heater, and at exposed pipes for leaks.
- ☐ Check exterior caulking, weatherstripping, paint, siding, fences, and deck surfaces.
- ☐ Test irrigation, hose bibs, drainage, and grading around the foundation.
- ☐ Clean dryer vents, bathroom exhaust fans, and refrigerator coils.
- ☐ Flush the water heater if recommended by the manufacturer and check its relief-valve discharge pipe.
- ☐ Trim vegetation away from roofs, chimneys, HVAC equipment, and siding; watch for pests or rot.
- ☐ Record system model numbers, service dates, warranties, and anything needing follow-up.

WHEN TO CALL FOR HELP

Water stains, active leaks, electrical concerns, gas odors, structural movement, persistent mold, or heating and cooling problems deserve prompt professional attention.

A BETTER HOME FILE

Keep receipts, permits, warranties, photos, and service notes together. Good records help with maintenance, insurance questions, and future planning.

07 | PROTECT

Security is a set of layers, not one gadget.

The goal is to make the home visible, occupied, and inconvenient to enter without turning ownership into a daily security project.

Home security checklist

- [] Use solid exterior-door hardware and lock doors, windows, garage access, and side gates.
- [] Add motion lighting at entries and keep shrubs, trees, and fences from blocking sightlines.
- [] Make house numbers easy for emergency responders to see from the street.
- [] Review who has keys, codes, garage remotes, smart-home access, and old alarm credentials.
- [] Use timers or smart controls for interior and exterior lights when traveling.
- [] Pause deliveries, hold mail, and arrange lawn care before an extended trip.
- [] Keep packages out of sight and avoid posting real-time travel details publicly.
- [] Know your neighbors and share a simple contact plan for unusual activity.

A quick travel reset

BEFORE YOU LEAVE

Test alarms, check doors and windows, set lights, confirm cameras, and move valuables away from visible windows.

WHEN YOU RETURN

Look for damage, moved items, water issues, or unfamiliar access. Update codes if a key or credential was shared while away.

08 | SAVE AND IMPROVE

Spend with a plan. Improve for comfort first.

The best project is one that solves a real problem, fits the home and neighborhood, and is documented well enough to help you later.

Before you approve a project

- [] Write down the problem, desired outcome, budget range, and preferred timing.
- [] Confirm permits, HOA requirements, contractor insurance, references, and a written scope.
- [] Ask how change orders, deposits, cleanup, inspections, and final payment will work.
- [] Compare operating costs, maintenance needs, warranties, and realistic payback before choosing equipment.
- [] Photograph the starting condition and keep contracts, receipts, permits, warranties, and final photos.

LOW-COST SAVINGS

Seal drafts, replace inefficient bulbs, adjust irrigation, fix running toilets, clean filters, and track utility patterns before buying equipment.

DOCUMENT THE VALUE

Record what changed, when it was completed, who did the work, the cost, and the warranty. Future you will be glad you did.

09 | PREPARE AND ORGANIZE

Make the first few minutes less chaotic.

A small amount of preparation can make outages, leaks, storms, wildfire smoke, and other disruptions easier to manage.

Preparedness checklist

- ☐ Label water, gas, and electrical shutoffs and make sure household members know where they are.
- ☐ Keep flashlights, batteries, first-aid supplies, water, basic tools, and chargers together.
- ☐ Save insurance, utility, emergency, medical, pet, and trusted-vendor contacts.
- ☐ Photograph rooms, valuables, major systems, and improvements; store the images securely.
- ☐ Review wildfire, flood, earthquake, and power-outage guidance for your area.
- ☐ Keep a go-bag, pet plan, medication list, and meeting point where everyone can find them.

Home records to keep

- ☐ System ages, model numbers, installation dates, and service history.
- ☐ Appliance manuals, warranties, receipts, permits, paint colors, and finish details.
- ☐ Insurance declarations, annual room photos, improvement documents, and vendor contacts.

10 | YOUR HOME NOTES

Turn good intentions into a home record.

Use this page for details you want to remember after a repair, inspection, service visit, or seasonal walk-through.

DATE / PROJECT	WHAT I NOTICED	NEXT STEP / CONTACT

Important contacts

CONTACT	NAME / COMPANY	PHONE / EMAIL
HVAC		
Plumber		
Electrician		
Insurance		
Neighbor / emergency contact		

A homeowner question? Dean is happy to help you think through a repair, improvement, insurance question, or long-term plan. Visit deansellsfast.com or use the contact page.