

Fall Home Maintenance Must-Dos: What to Check and Why

Exterior & Structure

1. Clean eavestroughs and downspouts

Why: Fallen leaves and debris cause backups and ice dams.

Best Practice: Clear twice in the fall, in early October, and again after the last leaves have dropped.

2. Check the roof and flashing

Why: Loose shingles or worn flashing lead to winter leaks.

Best Practice: Use binoculars from the ground or hire a roofer for inspection before snow arrives.

3. Shut off and drain exterior water taps

Why: Water left in outdoor lines can freeze and burst.

Best Practice: Close the interior shut-off valve and open the outdoor tap to let it drain fully.

4. Inspect weatherstripping and door seals

Why: Prevents drafts, moisture, and higher heating bills.

Best Practice: Close doors/windows and look for daylight. Replace worn strips or re-caulk gaps.

5. Sweep the chimney and inspect the fireplace

Why: Built-up soot can cause chimney fires.

Best Practice: Book a professional chimney sweep before your first fire of the season.

Systems & Safety

6. Book furnace servicing

Why: A tuned system runs efficiently and safely all winter.

Best Practice: Schedule early to beat the first frost and long booking waits.

7. Test smoke and CO detectors

Why: The Heating season brings a higher risk of CO leaks.

Best Practice: Test monthly and replace batteries immediately if it has been 6 months.

8. Change the furnace filter

Why: Dust builds up fast during shoulder season use.

Best Practice: Use a high-quality filter and swap it every 60–90 days.

9. Check the attic for ventilation and insulation gaps

Why: Poor airflow leads to ice dams and mould growth.

Best Practice: Look for signs of moisture, dark spots, or compressed insulation.

10. Inspect extension cords and outdoor lighting

Why: Days get shorter, and lights work harder.

Best Practice: Replace frayed cords and upgrade bulbs to energy-efficient LEDs.

Lifestyle & Outdoor Prep

11. Store or cover patio furniture

Why: Prolongs the life of fabric and wood finishes.

Best Practice: Clean and dry before storing. Use breathable covers if leaving outside.

12. Rake and mulch leaves

Why: Thick leaf layers smother lawns and clog storm drains.

Best Practice: Mulch with your mower or rake into compost piles. Avoid bagging if possible.

13. Check the garage and shed organization

Why: Make space for shovels, salt, and snow gear.

Best Practice: Hang tools, label bins, and move the spring gear to the back.

14. Swap out your summer wardrobe and bedding

Why: Creates space and prepares for cooler weather.

Best Practice: Launder and store summer items in sealed bins or fabric bags.

15. Prep Halloween decorations and safety lighting

Why: Slippery steps and poor lighting make for risky trick-or-treating.

Best Practice: Light pathways clearly, secure extension cords, and check all décor for trip hazards.