



# HOME MAINTENANCE GUIDE

Helpful tips to keep the systems and appliances in your new home running smoothly.



# LET'S PROTECT YOUR NEW HOME.

American Home Shield is here to help you protect your budget, which starts with protecting your home. Use this guide to keep track of service dates and details, and to keep your home running smoothly with a few helpful tips for your systems and appliances.

From all of us at American Home Shield,  
welcome home!



**For more information, including coverage options, contact your real estate professional.**





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# AIR CONDITIONING



System Make: \_\_\_\_\_

Model: \_\_\_\_\_

Serial Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Service Date	Description of Service
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Routine Maintenance Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

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## ROUTINE MAINTENANCE

- Check** A/C filters every month, making sure to clean or replace them at least once every three months.
- Perform** annual system maintenance during the spring to avoid the busy summer season. American Home Shield offers pre-season HVAC tune-ups for \$75 per unit.
- Keep** the condensing unit free of debris.
- Trim** shrubs and plants near the condensing unit to ensure proper airflow and circulation.
- Check** condensing unit's fins to see if they're bent. If so, you can find replacements at your local hardware store.
- Listen** for abnormal noises.

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## QUICK FIXES

**Problem:** Water leaks through the walls or ceiling of the A/C's housing.

**Try:** Make sure the drain line is not restricted and condensation drains freely.

**Problem:** A/C constantly cycles on and off.

**Try:** Call a qualified professional to clean the evaporator unit and fan.

**Problem:** A/C doesn't make air cool enough.

**Try:** • To ensure adequate airflow, keep the area around the exterior condensing unit clear of leaves, bushes, and other obstructions.

- Clean or replace the A/C filter.
- Create shade for the unit.
- Secure the insulation firmly to the suction line (large line), and replace any worn-out insulation.

**Problem:** A/C fails to start.

**Try:** • Check for tripped breaker.

- Check hoses for clogs.



# HEATING



System Make: \_\_\_\_\_

Model: \_\_\_\_\_

Serial Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Service Date	Description of Service
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Routine Maintenance Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

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## ROUTINE MAINTENANCE

- Check** HVAC filters every month (also known as a furnace filter or A/C filter).
- Perform** annual system maintenance during the fall to avoid the busy winter season. American Home Shield offers seasonal HVAC tune-ups for \$75 per unit.
- Smell** around the appliance for gas odors.
- Visually** inspect exhaust vent for rust, damage, or deterioration.
- Inspect** the fan belt for cracking or fraying. Also, check the belt's tension by pushing on the center and ensuring it only deflects 1/2" - 3/4".
- Become** familiar with normal operating sounds.

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## QUICK FIXES

**Problem:** There is no heat at all.

- Try:**
- Check for blown fuses or a tripped circuit breaker.
  - Replace the drive belt.

**Problem:** Soot collects in your house.

- Try:**
- Replace the HVAC filter.
  - Call a qualified professional to clean the heating system.

**Problem:** The blower makes unusual noises when the burner is off.

- Try:**
- Tighten the setscrews.
  - Replace the blower mounts.
  - Check to see if the belt is worn; replace if needed.
  - Loosen the belt tension.
  - Call a qualified professional.

**Problem:** Rooms are not warm enough.

- Try:**
- Replace the HVAC filter.
  - Clean the registers and remove any obstructions.
  - Seal any leaking ducts.

**Problem:** Heater is blowing cold air.

- Try:**
- Change HVAC filter.
  - Look for leaks in the ductwork. Seal off and insulate leaking ducts.
  - Make sure the pilot light in the furnace is on.



# ELECTRICAL



System Make: \_\_\_\_\_

Model: \_\_\_\_\_

Serial Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Service Date	Description of Service
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Routine Maintenance Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

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## ROUTINE MAINTENANCE

- Ensure** there are never too many appliances plugged into one circuit to help prevent circuit breaker trips and fire hazards.
- Regularly use** the self-test button on both the ground and arc-fault circuit interrupters to ensure proper working order.

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## QUICK FIXES

**Problem:** No electricity to an outlet.

- Try:**
- Try resetting the outlet if able to.
  - Try plugging another item into that outlet.
  - Check all other outlets.
  - Check circuit breaker box.
  - Call a qualified professional.

**Problem:** Fuses blow/breakers trip frequently.

- Try:**
- Replace the filter of the item triggering the blown fuse.
  - Make sure you are not running too many electrical appliances at the same time.
  - Call a qualified professional to identify the cause and make repairs.

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## TECHNICAL TERMS

**Amperage:** the strength of an electrical current.

**Circuit breaker:** A resettable device that responds to a preset excess of current flow by opening the circuit, thereby preventing damage to circuit elements.

**GFCI (ground-fault circuit interrupter):** A safety device that limits ground fault to 5 milliamps, which offers protection against electrical shock. It's commonly used outdoors, as well as by water sources in bathrooms and kitchens.

**AFCI (arc-fault circuit interrupter):** A type of circuit breaker that breaks the circuit when it detects a dangerous electrical arc in order to prevent electrical fires.

**NOTE:** NEVER WORK ON LIVE WIRES.



# PLUMBING



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Model: \_\_\_\_\_

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## ROUTINE MAINTENANCE

- Only** toilet paper should be flushed down a toilet.
- Maintain** water softener according to manufacturer's recommendation.
- Change** the water and ice maker filters according to manufacturer's recommendation.
- Drain** water heater tank to remove sediment according to manufacturer's recommendation.
- Treat** drains once a month to prevent clogs, whether they need it or not.
- Keep** food, coffee grounds, and grease away from kitchen drains.
- Prevent** hair and soap scum from going down bathroom drains.

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## QUICK FIXES

**Problem:** Clogged drain.

- Try:**
- Pour ½ cup of salt down the drain, followed by boiling water. Continue to flush with very hot water until clog is clear.
  - Place a stainless steel or silicone drain catcher over drain opening to help prevent future clogs.

**Problem:** Little or no water from faucet or showerhead.

- Try:**
- Check the shutoff valve.
  - Try cleaning the faucet and/or faucet head.
  - Call a qualified repair professional.

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## TECHNICAL TERMS

**Shutoff valve:** A valve that controls the flow of water to an individual fixture, allowing water supply to be stopped to one fixture without affecting the water supply to other fixtures. Know where to locate the whole-house water shutoff and ensure you have the proper tool(s) to operate it in the event of a water emergency.

**Gasket:** A resilient or flexible material used between matching surfaces to provide a leakproof seal.



# WATER HEATER



System Make: \_\_\_\_\_

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## ROUTINE MAINTENANCE

- Check** the gauge on the system's boiler to confirm the temperature, pressure, and water height in unit.
- Drain** water heater tank into a bucket, then rinse out any sediment from the bottom of the tank.
- Adjust** the temperature of the heater as needed. The dial should be located on the side of the tank and fitted with a cover that can be easily unscrewed.

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## QUICK FIXES

**Problem:** There is no hot water.

- Try:**
- Confirm whether you have a gas or electric water heater — a flue on the top and a burner on the bottom indicates gas, while electric models will connect to an electric circuit breaker.
  - If the heater is gas, make sure the pilot light is lit and the burner is on.
  - For electric heaters, turn off power to the item, then check the circuit breaker. If it has tripped, reset the breaker by flipping it off and then on.
  - Call a qualified repair professional.

**Problem:** Water is too hot.

- Try:**
- Check the temperature dial on the front of the water heater and adjust as needed.
  - Call a qualified repair professional.

**Problem:** The water has an odor or is discolored.

- Try:**
- To see if there are issues with just the hot water, let it run for a few minutes.
  - If the gas water heater emits a garlic smell, you may need to relight the pilot light.
  - Call a qualified repair professional.

**Problem:** Water leak around the bottom of the heater.

- Try:** Call a qualified repair professional.



# DUCTWORK



System Make: \_\_\_\_\_

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## ROUTINE MAINTENANCE

- Ensure** the ductwork, which is the system of tubes that delivers air to each room, is free of dirt and debris. Schedule cleanings as necessary.
- Check** the ductwork filters and change as needed.
- Inspect** furnace filters and replace if dirty — typically once every three months.
- Make sure** air isn't leaking into unheated spaces or that ducts aren't blocked or restricting airflow.
- Check** for proper airflow throughout your home.

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## QUICK FIXES

**Problem:** Air ducts are leaking.

- Try:**
- Insulate ducts to help prevent further leakage. If the ductwork in the basement requires insulating, the basement walls may need insulation, too.
  - Call a qualified repair professional.

**Problem:** Air is not flowing correctly.

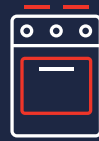
- Try:**
- Make sure furniture or other large objects are not blocking the system's registers (the grilles that help control airflow to a room).
  - Vacuum registers to remove any dirt or debris.
  - Call a qualified repair professional.

**Problem:** Rooms are slow to heat or cool.

- Try:**
- Check for any leaks in the ductwork. Start with sections that should be joined but may have separated over time.
  - Make sure ductwork is properly insulated.
  - Examine windows and doorways to make sure they are not allowing air to come in or escape to the outside.



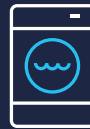




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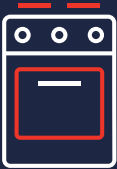
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# Appliances

# OVEN/RANGE



System Make: \_\_\_\_\_

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Service Date	Description of Service
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## ROUTINE MAINTENANCE

- If you have a self-cleaning oven**, do not use any other method to clean it.
- Clean** mineral deposits on the electric heating element with vinegar.
- Clean** or change the range's hood exhaust filters regularly (approximately every 3-6 months).
- Replace** the light bulb(s) accordingly.

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## QUICK FIXES

**Problem:** Water leaks through the walls or ceiling of the A/C's housing.

**Try:** Make sure the drain line is not restricted and condensation drains freely.

**Gas Range Problem:** A surface burner doesn't light.

- Try:**
- Ensure gas shutoff valve is turned to the open position.
  - Follow the manufacturer's instructions for relighting the pilot.
  - Check that the burner holes are clean.

**Electric Range Problem:** The range is not working at all.

- Try:**
- Check for blown fuses or a tripped circuit breaker.
  - Look for any damaged wires, burns, or tears.
  - Call a qualified repair professional.

**Gas Range Problem:** The pilot light doesn't remain lit.

- Try:**
- Use a small wire to clean the port.
  - Close windows and redirect A/C vents to prevent drafts near the range.

**Electric Range Problem:** One of the elements doesn't heat.

- Try:**
- Check each part to ensure it's plugged in well, and replace if necessary.
  - Call a qualified repair professional.



# REFRIGERATOR



System Make: \_\_\_\_\_

Model: \_\_\_\_\_

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## ROUTINE MAINTENANCE

- Clean** the interior shelves, shell, and gaskets regularly.
- Clean** the coils on the back or underneath with a vacuum cleaner.
- Keep** the refrigerator around 37°F and the freezer around 0°F.
- Test** if the door gasket is sealing properly by making sure it can hold a dollar bill in place when closed.
- Ensure** the unit is not overloaded and items are not blocking air circulation.

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## QUICK FIXES

**Problem:** The refrigerator is not running, no sound can be heard, and the interior light is out.

- Try:**
- Check for a blown fuse or a tripped circuit breaker.
  - Check the plug and replace the cord if damaged.

**Problem:** The refrigerator constantly cycles on and off.

- Try:**
- Clean the coils with a vacuum only.
  - Call a qualified repair professional.

**Problem:** The refrigerator has stopped running, the light is on, and there is an occasional clicking.

- Try:** Test the thermostat and replace if needed.

**Problem:** Frost forms rapidly or the unit does not defrost.

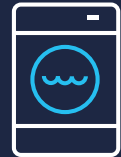
- Try:**
- Adjust the door hinges.
  - Clean or replace the gasket. Leaks in the door seal will make it difficult to maintain the desired temperature.

**Problem:** The refrigerator is leaking water.

- Try:**
- Check the defrost drain, and flush if needed.
  - Check the water supply line for kinks, clogs, or tears.



# WASHER



System Make: \_\_\_\_\_

Model: \_\_\_\_\_

Serial Number: \_\_\_\_\_

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## ROUTINE MAINTENANCE

- Adjust** the level of the washing machine by turning the legs clockwise to lower them or counterclockwise to raise them.
- Inspect** cold and hot water supply hoses for cracks or deterioration.
- Clean** the washer every 3 months by running hot water with 3 cups of white distilled vinegar and ½ cup of baking soda. When it begins to drain, advance it to spin. After the cycle ends, run it again on cold to rinse.
- If you have a front-loading machine**, remove wet clothes immediately to avoid developing a musty odor.
- Avoid** overloading the washer to help keep the machine on balance and in proper working order.

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## QUICK FIXES

**Problem:** Tub fills with water, but the machine doesn't run.

- Try:**
- Make sure the lid is closed. If it is, ensure the switch is fully depressed.
  - Lighten the load and wait 15 minutes for the motor to reset.

**Problem:** Washing machine doesn't fill with water.

- Try:**
- Check and clean the hot and cold inlet hose filters.
  - Straighten the water supply hoses.
  - Turn the timer slightly or press the buttons firmly.

**Problem:** Water doesn't stop filling the tub.

- Try:**
- Repair or replace the water hose.
  - Check the water level switch and replace it.
  - Replace the timer or call a qualified professional.

**Problem:** Washing machine does not operate.

- Try:**
- Check for blown fuses or a tripped circuit breaker.
  - Check lid switch.
  - Open the water shutoff valves.



# DRYER



System Make: \_\_\_\_\_

Model: \_\_\_\_\_

Serial Number: \_\_\_\_\_

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## ROUTINE MAINTENANCE

- Adjust** the level of the clothes dryer by turning the legs clockwise to lower them or counterclockwise to raise them.
- Clean** the lint screen after each load of clothes has been dried.
- Clean** the ductwork and outside the vent — your vacuum cleaner or a vent cleaning brush may help clean ducts thoroughly.

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## QUICK FIXES

**Problem:** Dryer does not operate.

**Try:** • Check for a blown fuse or tripped circuit breaker.

- Check the switch and replace if necessary.
- Check the control timer and replace if necessary.

**Problem:** It takes too long to dry a load.

**Try:** • Clean the lint screen and exhaust vent.

- Reduce the load and try again.
- Call a qualified repair professional.

**Problem:** Motor runs, but the drum doesn't turn.

**Try:** • Open the unit and look for obstructions around the drum.

- Replace the belt.
- Check the assembly and replace if necessary.

**Problem:** Drum turns, but clothes remain wet.

**Try:** • Clean the lint screen and exhaust vent.

- Check the thermostat and replace if necessary.
- Check the heating element and replace if needed.
- Examine the timer and replace if required.



# DISPOSAL



System Make: \_\_\_\_\_

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## ROUTINE MAINTENANCE

- To clean** the disposal, feed a full tray of ice cubes through it while running cold water.
- To prevent** stoppages, remember to run cold water before, during, and after operation.
- Avoid** using the garbage disposal if you are on a septic system.
- Only** grind biodegradable food with cold water.

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## QUICK FIXES

**Problem:** The motor hums, but the unit doesn't grind.

- Try:**
- Free the flywheel using the supplied tool. Push the reset button.
  - Call a qualified professional.

**Problem:** Garbage disposal doesn't operate.

- Try:**
- Check for blown fuses or tripped circuit breakers.
  - On continuous-feed models, check the wall switch. On batch-feed models, check the stopper switch.
  - If the flywheel is jammed, free it using the supplied tool or a long wooden spoon handle. Push the reset button.

**Problem:** Discharge drain pipe leaks.

- Try:**
- Check the bolts holding the discharge pipe to disposal for tightness.
  - If tightening the bolts does not work, remove the pipe and replace the gasket.

**NOTE:** BE SURE TO TURN OFF POWER TO THE DISPOSAL BEFORE TROUBLESHOOTING. IF AN OBJECT GETS STUCK IN THE DISPOSAL, USE TONGS OR PLIERS TO RETRIEVE IT. NEVER USE YOUR HAND.



# DISHWASHER



System Make: \_\_\_\_\_

Model: \_\_\_\_\_

Serial Number: \_\_\_\_\_

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## ROUTINE MAINTENANCE

- Clean** larger areas of dishwasher — such as the door and interior walls — with a damp cloth. For smaller spaces, try using an old toothbrush to remove debris.
- Repair** or remove chipped plastic coating on dish racks to prevent rust.
- If rust is found** on the racks, use a steel wool sponge to remove the buildup.
- Remove** any lime buildup on the water feed equipment.
- Make sure** machine's arms and nozzles are unclogged and that water is running freely through them. If debris is detected, try removing it with needle-nose pliers.

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## QUICK FIXES

**Problem:** Dishwasher leaks.

- Try:**
- Check for any damage or debris that may be preventing the door from sealing completely.
  - Clean the door gasket with disinfectant — this may help you detect any significant cracks in the gasket.
  - Make sure the float switch that controls the machine's water level is not stuck in the down position.

**Problem:** Dishes are covered in residue or are still dirty after washing.

- Try:**
- Make sure you're not overloading the dishwasher.
  - Check to see if any object is blocking the spray arms from spinning.
  - Remove any debris blocking the strain screen and door gasket.

**Problem:** Dishwasher is emitting a foul odor.

- Try:**
- Examine machine for signs of wet or old food debris.
  - Clean the screen located at the bottom of the dishwasher.
  - Pre-rinse dishes to reduce the amount of food waste in the machine.





## **WE COVER THE HOME SYSTEMS AND APPLIANCES THAT KEEP YOUR HOME RUNNING SMOOTHLY.**

If there's one thing homeowners know to expect, it's the unexpected. That's why we exist. American Home Shield helps protect your budget against covered household breakdowns including components of home systems such as your HVAC, electrical, and plumbing, as well as appliances like your oven, refrigerator, and washing machine. You know — the things you count on every single day.

And we have a nationwide network of 17,000 contractors. Why is that important? Because, it means they're in your area. So, when you need help, it's right around the corner. Service requests can be made by going online 24/7 at [ahs.com/my-account](https://ahs.com/my-account) or calling **800.776.4663**.

### **HOW DOES AMERICAN HOME SHIELD WORK?**

We make it easy to get service for your covered home system and appliances. Just follow the steps below when a breakdown occurs:

- 1** Request service online or by phone.
- 2** Pay your Trade Service Call Fee.
- 3** We assign a repair professional.
- 4** We repair or replace your covered home system or appliance.

**For more information, visit [ahs.com](https://ahs.com) or contact your real estate professional.**

*Limitations and exclusions apply. See agreement for details.*











For other DIY maintenance tips, visit  
**[youtube.com/user/TheAHSTeam](https://www.youtube.com/user/TheAHSTeam)**.



**[ahshome.com](https://www.ahshome.com) | 800.776.4663**