

HVAC Maintenance Checklist

An HVAC maintenance checklist covering filters, coils, thermostat and professional service.

Air Filters

- Check the air filter monthly and replace it when dirty
 - Replace 1-inch filters at least every 90 days
- Match the filter size and MERV rating to your system
- Replace filters more often with pets, allergies or smoke
- Keep spare filters on hand so you never delay a change
- Write the install date on the filter frame to track changes

Outdoor Condenser Unit

- Clear leaves, grass and debris from around the unit
- Keep at least two feet of clearance on all sides
- Gently rinse the condenser fins with a hose
 - Turn off power at the disconnect before cleaning
- Straighten bent fins carefully with a fin comb
- Check that the unit sits level on its pad

Indoor Unit & Coils

- Vacuum dust from the blower compartment when power is off
- Check the evaporator coil for dirt and have a pro clean if needed
- Clear the condensate drain line and pan of clogs and slime
- Inspect the drain pan for standing water or rust
- Listen for unusual rattles, squeals or grinding noises

Thermostat & Controls

- Test heating and cooling modes for correct response
- Replace thermostat batteries once a year
- Program schedules to cut runtime when you're away or asleep
- Confirm the displayed temperature matches a separate thermometer
- Update settings each season for heating or cooling

Vents & Ductwork

- Keep supply and return vents clear of furniture and rugs
- Vacuum dust from registers and grilles
- Check accessible ducts for gaps, leaks or loose connections
- Seal small duct leaks with mastic or foil tape, not cloth duct tape
- Consider a professional duct inspection every few years

Professional Service

- Book a cooling tune-up in spring and a heating tune-up in fall
- Have the technician check refrigerant levels and pressures
- Ask them to inspect electrical connections and tighten as needed
- Have the heat exchanger inspected for cracks on gas furnaces
 - A cracked heat exchanger can leak carbon monoxide

Keep service records to track repairs and warranty coverage