



Quarterly Maintenance Checklist

A Proactive Guide to Air Quality, Moisture, and Mould Prevention

Introduction

Maintaining a healthy home is about more than just cleaning. It's about proactive prevention. Small, consistent maintenance tasks can prevent costly remediation work down the line by controlling the two biggest threats to a healthy indoor environment: excess moisture and poor air quality. Use this checklist each quarter to protect your property and the health of your family.

Spring Checklist (September - November)

Focus: Recovering from winter, checking for damage, and preparing for warmer, wetter weather.

HVAC & Air Quality

- ☐ **Schedule Professional HVAC Service:** Have your cooling system serviced and cleaned before its first heavy use.
- ☐ **Change HVAC Filter:** Start the season with a fresh filter to capture pollen and other allergens.
- ☐ **Clean All Vents & Grilles:** Vacuum dust and debris from all supply and return air vents.

- ☐ **Open Windows:** On dry, low-pollen days, air out the house thoroughly to flush out stale winter air.

Moisture & Mould Inspection

- ☐ **Interior Visual Inspection:** Walk through every room. Look for any signs of water staining, discolouration, or musty odours on ceilings, walls (especially behind furniture), and around windows that may have occurred over winter.
- ☐ **Check Under Sinks:** Look for slow drips or signs of water damage in all kitchen and bathroom cabinets.
- ☐ **Inspect Appliance Hoses:** Check hoses for washing machines, dishwashers, and refrigerators for any cracks, brittleness, or leaks.

Exterior & Drainage

- ☐ **Clean Gutters & Downspouts:** Remove all leaves and debris accumulated over winter to ensure proper water flow away from your foundation.
 - ☐ **Check Foundation & Siding:** Walk the perimeter of your home. Look for cracks in the foundation, gaps in siding, or areas where soil is sloped *towards* the house. Correct grading to ensure water flows away.
 - ☐ **Inspect Roof:** From the ground (or safely on a ladder), look for any missing, cracked, or damaged shingles that could cause leaks.
 - ☐ **Service Sump Pump:** If you have one, test your sump pump to ensure it's ready for spring rains.
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Summer Checklist (December - February)

Focus: Managing humidity, controlling pests, and maintaining cooling systems.

HVAC & Air Quality

- ☐ **Change/Clean HVAC Filter:** Your system works hard in summer; a clean filter is essential for efficiency and air quality.
- ☐ **Clean Exhaust Fans:** Vacuum and wipe down kitchen and bathroom exhaust fans to ensure they are effectively removing humidity and odours.
- ☐ **Check A/C Condensate Line:** Ensure the drain line for your air conditioner is clear and dripping freely outside, not backing up. A blockage can cause significant water damage.

Moisture & Mould Inspection

- ☐ **Interior Visual Inspection:** Pay close attention to basements, crawl spaces, and attics where high humidity can lead to condensation and mould growth.

- ☐ **Monitor Indoor Humidity:** Consider using a hygrometer. Ideal indoor humidity is between 30-50%. Use dehumidifiers in damp areas like basements if necessary.
- ☐ **Check for Condensation:** Look for condensation on windows, pipes, and toilet tanks. This is a sign of high indoor humidity that needs to be addressed.

Exterior & General

- ☐ **Inspect for Pests:** Check for signs of termites, rodents, or insects, as they can compromise your home's structure and create pathways for moisture.
 - ☐ **Check Window & Door Seals:** Ensure seals are intact to keep cool air in and humid air out, improving A/C efficiency.
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Autumn Checklist (March - May)

Focus: Preparing for winter, sealing air leaks, and ensuring heating systems are safe.

HVAC & Air Quality

- ☐ **Schedule Professional HVAC Service:** Have your heating system inspected, cleaned, and serviced before you need it.
- ☐ **Change HVAC Filter:** A clean filter is critical for a healthy heating system.
- ☐ **Test Smoke & Carbon Monoxide Detectors:** Replace batteries and test all units. This is non-negotiable before turning on heating systems.
- ☐ **Clean Fireplace & Chimney:** If you have a fireplace, have it professionally swept and inspected.

Moisture & Mould Inspection

- ☐ **Interior Visual Inspection:** Do a thorough check before closing the house up for winter. Look behind appliances and in closets for any hidden issues.
- ☐ **Inspect Attic & Roof:** Check the attic for signs of leaks, mould, or pests. Ensure insulation is dry and ventilation is not blocked.

Exterior & Drainage

- ☐ **Final Gutter & Downspout Cleaning:** Clean out fallen leaves one last time before winter rains and potential freezes.
 - ☐ **Seal Air Leaks:** Check windows, doors, and any wall penetrations (for pipes or wires) for drafts. Caulk and weatherstrip as needed to prevent moisture intrusion and heat loss.
 - ☐ **Protect Outdoor Faucets:** Drain and shut off outdoor water lines to prevent pipes from freezing and bursting.
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Winter Checklist (June - August)

Focus: Indoor air quality, preventing condensation, and monitoring heating systems.

HVAC & Air Quality

- ☐ **Change/Clean HVAC Filter:** Heating systems can circulate dust and allergens. Keep the filter clean.
- ☐ **Clean Dryer Vent:** Lint build-up is a fire hazard and can harbour moisture and mould. Clean the entire vent line from the dryer to the exterior exit.
- ☐ **Monitor & Control Humidity:** Winter air is dry, but indoor activities can create moisture. Run bathroom and kitchen exhaust fans during and after showers/cooking to vent humid air outside.

Moisture & Mould Inspection

- ☐ **Interior Visual Inspection:** This is the most critical time for spotting condensation-related issues. Check window sills, corners of exterior-facing walls, and behind curtains for moisture or mould spots.
- ☐ **Check Basement/Crawlspace:** Look for any signs of dampness, efflorescence (a white, chalky powder on concrete), or musty smells.
- ☐ **Organise & Declutter:** Improving airflow behind furniture and in closets helps prevent stagnant, moist air pockets where mould can grow.

Safety & General

- ☐ **Test Smoke & Carbon Monoxide Detectors:** Monthly tests are ideal, but ensure it's on the quarterly list.
- ☐ **Inspect Fire Extinguishers:** Check that they are charged and easily accessible.

When to Call a Professional

This checklist empowers you to handle preventative maintenance. However, contact a certified remediation professional immediately if you notice:

- Visible mould growth larger than 1 square metre.
- A persistent, musty "mouldy" smell you cannot locate.
- Widespread water damage from a leak, flood, or burst pipe.
- Signs of structural water damage, like warped floors or sagging ceilings.

Disclaimer: This checklist is intended as a general guide. Every home is different, and specific conditions may require additional maintenance. Always prioritise safety when performing any maintenance task. Consult with qualified professionals for specific issues.

