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## HOME, LAWN & GARDEN

# Tackle home maintenance projects to save money

Much like the upkeep on your car, tackling home maintenance on a regular basis will prevent problems from developing and save you from larger repair costs down the road. Some projects should be left to the professionals, but there are plenty of weekend jobs that any homeowner can easily handle, like these:

Inspect your roof and make minor repairs. Winter can be especially hard on a roof. Look for ice, hail or water damage. Replace any cracked or missing shingles and clear any debris.

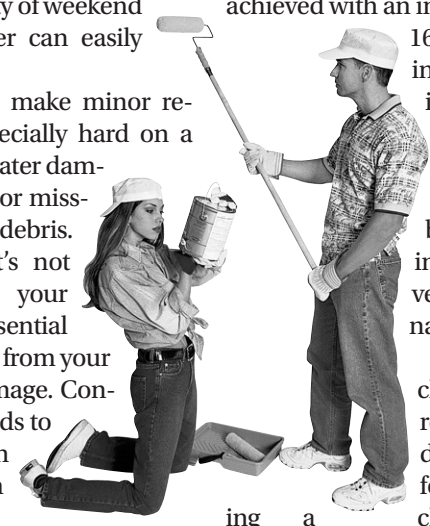
Clean your gutters. It's not glamorous work, but your home's gutters play an essential role in moving water away from your home and preventing damage. Consider installing gutter guards to ensure your gutters remain functional and free from debris.

Inspect windows and doors and re-caulk, where necessary. Because a proper seal is essential in both heating and cooling seasons, this job should be performed twice

a year to protect against drafts and moisture, and to keep insects out. Worn weather stripping should also be replaced.

Check your insulation. Attics should be insulated to R50, which can usually be achieved with an insulation depth of at least 16 inches. Top up with an insulation product that is water repellant and fire resistant, like Roxul Comfortbatt. Don't forget to ensure that your basement headers are insulated properly to prevent overworking your furnace and air conditioner.

Other simple jobs include fixing leaky faucets, repairing and resealing decks, inspecting the foundation and scheduling a check-up for your HVAC system. The key is being honest about what you can handle and, when in doubt, call in the pros.



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