

A Special
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Don't let the wind blow your doors off

Your doors need regular maintenance to stay in good condition. With fall breezes and winter winds on the way, you'll need sturdy, reliable doors that lead to the warmth and comfort of your home.

Many doors have the pneumatic type of door closer. This kind of closer has a long tube with a piston and rod inside. To maintain this door closer, wipe the rod with an oil-covered cloth in the fall and spring.

If you encounter any problems, such as the door swinging too slowly or too quickly, you can adjust the door closer. Start by opening the door just a little and moving the hold-open washer so that the door stays open. This will make the repair go much more smoothly. At the opposite end of the tube away from the hold-open washer you should see a metal pin that attaches the closer to the door bracket. If the washer end of the tube is attached to the door bracket, this could be the problem. You will have to reinstall the door closer if this is the case.

If the door is installed the right direction and is not swinging properly, you can adjust the closer in a few simple steps. Start by gently tapping on the pin with a hammer. If there is no pin, just unhook it. You will now be able to rotate the tube. Check the manufacturer's instructions, if you have them, to see which way to rotate the tube. Normally, the tube should be rotated clockwise to slow down the door. If the door is still not satisfactory when you are finished, try using half-rotations until the door closes the way you would like.

If rotating the tube does not solve the problem, you can move the bracket. If the rod does not slide fully into the tube, move the door bracket closer to the hinge. If you see extra holes, you might try using those holes when moving the bracket. If the bracket is loose, replace the existing screws with larger screws. You can move the door closer to any place along the doorframe as long as it does not interfere with the doorstop chain or the threshold.

Once you have repaired the closer, if the area around it is damaged, repair it. Use a small piece of material that closely matches the damaged area. Make sure that you cut the matching piece about two inches longer (on each side) than the original area. Drill holes through the new piece, paint it and then install it against the door. If the door is made of wood, use flathead wood screws. If it is metal, use panhead screws.

Doors that close properly are necessary for the protection and warmth of your family and home. So make sure that your doors do not fly out of your hands as the winter winds furiously blow.

—By Kathy Scott, special

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