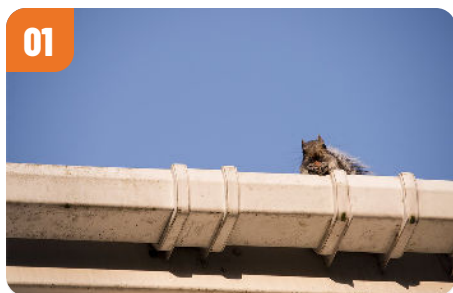


SEASONAL HOME CARE GUIDE

Fall Maintenance Tips

Preparing your home for winter is an important part of homeownership. Skipping it can lead to bigger issues come spring, or failures at the worst possible time. Routine maintenance now helps make sure you are not left without heat in mid-January.

01



PEST PREVENTION

Seal exterior damage from pests

We aren't the only creatures seeking comfort from the winter cold. Squirrels, mice, rats, and even bats will not hesitate to settle into your attic if they can find a way in. Check the exterior for possible entry points and repair any damaged siding, vents, and chimney caps. Trim back branches overhanging the home or roof, since they give rodents a pathway inside.

ROOF & DRAINAGE

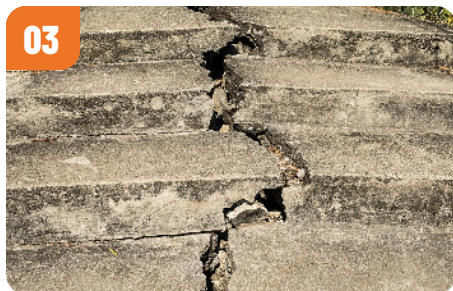
Clean out your gutters

Trapped leaves hold moisture directly against your home, which can lead to overflowing gutters, roof damage, and wood rot at the fascia and soffit. Clogged gutters also stop water from being directed away from the foundation, causing soil erosion that can let the foundation move or send water into a crawl space or basement.

02



03



SLIP & FALL SAFETY

Ensure exterior walkway & railing safety

The risk of slipping and falling is much higher in winter, and it only goes up when walkways are left unchecked. Snow and ice can hide damaged or uneven walkways, and a wobbly railing won't help on icy stairs. Confirm your exterior railings are properly secured and your walkways and stairs are in good condition.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Seal drafts & check insulation

Fall is the time to prepare for the winter cold. Check insulation levels in the attic and add more if needed. Look around entry doors for daylight and replace weatherstripping wherever it shows. Check windows for cracked or deteriorated caulking and reseal them. Sealing these areas keeps your home warmer and lowers your energy bills.

04



SEASONAL HOME CARE GUIDE

Fall Maintenance Tips, Continued

HEATING & FIREPLACES

Schedule heating system maintenance

We spend more time in our homes during the winter months, and the last thing you want is a heating system failure. It is a major inconvenience, and repairs can cost much more during peak season. Make sure your home stays warm by verifying your heating system is in full working condition before it is too late.

If you have a vented gas fireplace, check the vents for obstructions. For vent-free types, operate with the windows open to burn off any collected dust. Chimneys for wood-burning fireplaces should be inspected yearly and swept as needed to prevent creosote buildup.

05



Additional Tips

Check them off as you go

- ☐ **Irrigation**
Drain the irrigation system to prevent freezing.
- ☐ **Dryer Vent**
Make sure the dryer vent is not clogged and is venting properly.
- ☐ **Safety Devices**
Test smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, and check fire extinguishers.
- ☐ **Lawn Equipment**
Winterize lawnmowers and other lawn equipment with fuel stabilizer.
- ☐ **Hoses**
Turn off exterior hose faucets to keep pipes from freezing.
- ☐ **Furnace Filters**
Change your furnace filter. Check your owner's manual for how often it needs replacing.
- ☐ **Patio**
Cover outdoor furniture to prevent wear.
- ☐ **Lawn**
Rake and remove leaves from the grass to ensure healthy growth in spring.

Questions about your home?
We're here to help.

Reach out to the Home Inspection Carolina team.

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