

REALTOR RESOURCE

Life Span of Home Components

Typical service life for common home systems and materials. Actual life varies with installation quality, maintenance, usage, and climate.

Plumbing

TYPE	LIFE SPAN	YEARS USED	COMMON ISSUES
Brass	40-70 years	1900-1935	Corrosion causes leaks, and repairs are expensive.
Copper	50+ years	1935-Present	Acidic water can cause problems, so it is not ideal for homes that draw water from a well.
Galvanized Steel	20-50 years	1900-1950s	Corrodes from the inside, restricting flow and shortening its life. Older pipes may contain lead.
Cast Iron	75-100 years	1900-1980s	Extremely strong and durable but brittle. It can break if accidentally struck.
PVC (Polyvinyl Chloride)	50-80 years	Late 1960s-Present	Failures usually trace back to improper installation.
Polybutylene	25-30 years	1970s-1990s	Prone to breakage.
Lead	100 years	1900s-1940	Test the water. Lead pipes should be replaced; there is no known safe level of lead exposure.
CPVC	50-80 years	1985-Present	Failures usually trace back to improper installation.
ABS	50-80 years	Mid-1980s	Some local codes no longer allow ABS. Watch for leaks in black plastic drain, waste, or vent piping.
PEX	40 years	1990s-Present	Can fail from chlorine in the water or sunlight exposure before installation. Dezincification of brass fittings is the leading cause of failure.

Electrical

TYPE	LIFE SPAN
Bare Copper	100+ years
Copper-Clad Aluminum	100+ years
Copper-Plated	100+ years
Service Panel	60 years
Arc-Fault Circuit Interrupters (AFCIs)	30 years
Ground-Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCIs)	Up to 30 years

GOOD TO KNOW

Copper-plated wiring, copper-clad aluminum, and bare copper wiring should last a lifetime. Electrical accessories and lighting controls, such as dimmer switches, can last more than 10 years but may need replacing sooner. GFCIs and AFCIs may last 30 years, but much less if tripped regularly.

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Life Span of Home Components, **Continued**

Roofing

TYPE	LIFE SPAN
Asphalt Shingles (3-Tab)	20 years
Asphalt Shingles (Architectural)	30 years
Copper	70+ years
EPDM Rubber	15-25 years
Metal	40-80 years
Slate	60-150 years
Clay/Concrete	100+ years
Wood	30 years

GOOD TO KNOW

Roof life expectancy varies with weather conditions, material quality, maintenance, and the structure's location. Warmer climates can significantly reduce the life of asphalt shingles.

Appliances

TYPE	LIFE SPAN
Refrigerator	9-13 years
Dishwasher	9 years
Food Waste Disposal	12 years
Trash Compactor	6 years
Washing Machine	5-15 years
Dryer	13 years
Gas Range	15-17 years
Electric Range	13-15 years
Microwave Oven	9 years
Whole-House Vacuum System	20 years

GOOD TO KNOW

Modern appliances have integrated technology that makes them more efficient, but more expensive to repair.

Heating & Air

TYPE	LIFE SPAN
Air Conditioners	8-12 years
Central Air-Conditioning Unit	7-12 years
Evaporative Coolers	15-25 years
Attic Fan	15-25 years
Ducting	60-100 years
Furnaces	15-25 years
Gas Fireplace	15-25 years
Heat Exchangers	10-15 years
Heat Pumps	10-15 years
Chimney Flue Tile	40-100 years

GOOD TO KNOW

HVAC systems and components can last longer if they are serviced and maintained properly.

Garage

TYPE	LIFE SPAN
Garage Doors	20-25 years
Garage Door Openers	10-15 years

Questions about a home's systems? We're here to help.

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