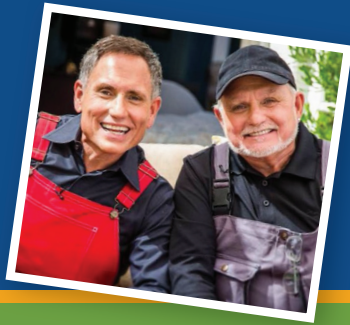


On the House

With the Carey Brothers
Tips of the Month



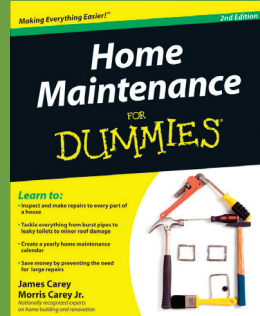
FALL HOME MAINTENANCE FOR DUMMIES

Regular home maintenance is essential to reducing costs and preventing problems. A little cleaning here and patching there will keep your home safe, efficient and help preserve its appearance, integrity and value.

With different seasons come different tasks, thus, we share a few items on our autumn checklist that may need a bit of attention at this time of year.

- Don't wait until it rains to determine if your roof is leaking. Use a garden hose to water-test the roof and flashings for leaks. Start at the lowest point of the roof – near the eaves – and work your way up to the ridge, tackling a six-foot wide section at a time. Pay attention to valley flashings, plumbing and exhaust vent flashings and around chimneys. Have someone in the attic with a flashlight and cellphone looking for leaks. Use caution working on your roof and wear rubber soled shoes and a safety harness.
- Clogged gutters can back up and lead to roof leaks and expensive repairs. Check gutters and downspouts for debris, clean, caulk and touch up paint. Use a wire brush and/or a wire wheel on a cordless driver drill to remove rust. Apply a rust converter to stubborn rust and use gutter caulk to seal any leak points. Now would be an excellent time to install a gutter protection system to keep gutters clean. Be sure your ladder is on solid footing and take all necessary safety precautions.
- Repair crumbling or missing mortar joints around brick and masonry. This repair process is called "tuck-pointing." Use a cold chisel or grinder to remove flaking mortar and thoroughly clean the area with a brush and shop vac. Dampen the affected area with clean water and apply mortar patch in accordance with manufacturer directions using a tuck-pointing tool. Use a penetrating sealer to protect all masonry from water intrusion, which can cause freeze-thaw damage.
- Prepare for and prevent ice dams at eaves. One of the most effective means of preventing an ice dam is to keep the underside of your roof cool. Do this by making sure that the attic is well insulated and there are no gaps in the insulation, which cause heat from living space to escape into the attic. Also, ensure that there is ample high and low passive ventilation at the eaves and up high on the roof or at the ridge. Keeping the roof cool will prevent snow from thawing and refreezing, which can contribute to an ice dam. Chronic ice dams can also be prevented using eave-heating cable.
- Prevent drafts and energy loss by using a high quality exterior grade caulk around window and door trim. Caulking gaps prevents water from getting into areas that can cause rot. Caulk will also help prevent pests from making your home their home.

Get more home maintenance tips and information by picking up our book, *Home Maintenance For Dummies, 2nd Edition* (Wiley 2010) online and at bookstores everywhere.



Ask the Carey Brothers a home improvement or remodeling question on their live radio broadcast every Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Eastern Time.

Call toll-free at **1-800-737-2474** to ask your question.

Visit their website at **OnTheHouse.com** for recaps of the show & other helpful info.

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