

# HOUSE CARE & MAINTENANCE GUIDE



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In this guide you'll find maintenance tasks, troubleshooting tips, the tools you need, and more to help maintain your home systems and appliances.

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# Home Maintenance 101

Even though you have the protection offered by a First American home warranty, practicing routine maintenance will help keep your home systems and appliances running safely and efficiently.

This guide includes helpful home maintenance practices and tips that you can do yourself or with the help of a service professional.



## Attic and Exhaust Fans

- Clean attic exhaust fan blades every few years to keep dirt and grime from building up and to help prevent blade imbalance.
- Clean kitchen and bathroom exhaust fan blades once per year.
- Clean kitchen exhaust fan filter once every six months by removing and soaking it for an hour in a vinegar cleaning solution. Then scrub off any remaining grease and grime, rinse, air dry, and replace.



*Run the bathroom exhaust fan for at least five minutes after each shower to prevent moisture damage and decrease buildup of mold.*

*If unsure about your home's attic fan and roof ventilation system, schedule a roof inspection and ask about the ventilation equipment in the attic.*

## Ceiling Fans

- Clean the dust off the tops of the fan blades regularly to help prevent blade imbalance, which can be a safety hazard and lead to burnout of the fan motor.



*During colder months, set the fan to run in a clockwise direction, which pushes warm air down from the ceiling to help keep your home warmer. In warmer months, set the fan to run in a counter-clockwise direction to create a cooling effect.*

*Use a ceiling fan instead of the air conditioner in summer to decrease energy use and save money. On average, a ceiling fan uses approximately 60 watts of energy per day, whereas a central air conditioner uses 3,500 watts of energy per day.*

## Central Air Conditioning

- Schedule a yearly professional maintenance in early spring to discover any problems before high usage months.
- Clear vegetation or debris from around the outside air conditioner condenser unit.



*If system is blowing hot air, replace the filter.*

*Replace disposable air filters monthly during high usage months. If your system uses a washable filter, clean it monthly during heavy use.*

## Your Perfect Toolbox

If you're a homeowner, you need some tools. Make sure your toolbox has all of the essentials:

- Adjustable crescent wrench
- Adjustable pliers with locking mechanism
- Claw hammer
- Flat-head screwdriver
- Handheld level
- Heavy-duty flashlight and extra batteries
- Heavy-duty scissors
- Outdoor electrical extension cord (minimum 25 feet)
- Phillips-head screwdriver
- Power drill and drill bits
- Putty knife
- Safety goggles
- Tape measure (minimum 12 feet)
- Work gloves
- Utility knife





# Home Maintenance 101

## Central Vacuum System

- Empty the central vacuum system's dirt canister at least twice per year, or more regularly with heavy use.
- Clean or change filters according to schedule in manufacturer's guidelines to continue maintaining cleaner indoor air benefit of sycondenser unit.



*Low suction may indicate it's time to clean or change the filter, and check and empty the dirt canister. If low suction persists, use a shop vacuum to clear blockages from hose outlets.*

## Clothes Dryer

- Clean lint screen after every load.
- Occasionally wash the lint screen with warm, soapy water to remove buildup from fabric softeners.
- Use a long-handled, narrow brush to remove excess lint from lint trap opening. Periodically check for kinks in dryer exhaust duct or exterior vent to ensure dryer is venting effectively.
- Have a professional check and clean dryer vent and ducting as needed.



*Do not overload a dryer — crammed loads can't dry properly and waste a lot of energy.*

*If dryer is taking a long time to dry clothes or not blowing hot air, check that drying cycle is set to heat; the air dry cycle only blows air and tumbles laundry but will not produce heat.*

## Clothes Washer

- Replace hoses every three to five years. A plumber can also inspect and replace hoses as needed.
- Periodically check the balance of machine with a level. If it is off balance, adjust the feet and test again.



*If machine is not spinning or draining, check that the lid switch is engaging. If it is bent or broken, the lid will not close properly, which may cause unit to not complete its cycle. A broken belt can also keep a washer from draining.*

*To check if a front loading machine is out of balance, run a cycle without laundry and if unit thumps, a shock absorber or spring may be broken.*

## Dish Washer

- Run an empty cycle with a cup of vinegar solution to deodorize and clear out old food particles every few months.
- Clean the dishwasher trap and seals regularly to remove any old food bits or clogs.
- Clean the rubber door gasket and the inside of the dishwasher monthly to remove accumulated gunk and soap residue to help maintain a tight door seal.



*If the dishwasher is leaking or won't drain, the door may not be sealing properly. Also, check to see if something may be jamming the float at the bottom of the dishwasher (it looks like the cap of a laundry detergent bottle).*

*Push the Cancel or Drain button after every load completes to clear any sitting water from the drain hose. This cycle is also handy for testing that the dishwasher's relay and pump are working correctly.*



## Did You Know...

Vinegar is an easy, cheap, and better-for-you cleaning solution for many cleaning tasks.

Whether you need a cupful or a bucketful, simply mix equal amounts of water and vinegar and you're ready to clean.



# Home Maintenance 101

## Ductwork

- Every three years, schedule a professional air duct cleaning service.
- Inspect exposed ducts and connections in the attic, basement, or crawl space yearly for potential leaks and, if found, use a sealant to plug them, or contact a professional.
- Remove the wall grates that cover the vents in every room once per year and clean the grates.



*For homes with flexible ductwork, schedule yearly inspections to ensure the ductwork is maintaining its shape.*

## Electrical

- If any sockets appear to be loose when plugging in an electric device, contact an electrician as this can be a safety hazard.



*If any lights or outlets aren't working, check the circuit breakers at the main electric panel to ensure they are in the on position and try turning them off then back on again.*

*If a GFCI outlet isn't working, push the Test button followed by the Reset button and try the outlet again.*

## Garage Door Openers

- Periodically lubricate the garage door's chain the same way as a bicycle chain, by spraying a lubricant on the chain.
- Regularly use a blower to clear dirt and debris from around the tracks on either side of the door.
- Inspect the door's roller brackets and bolts every six months and tighten as needed using a socket wrench.



*Periodically check the safety feature that detects objects or people in the doorway as it closes to be sure it is working properly.*

## Garbage Disposal

- Once per month, clean the garbage disposal by filling the drain with ice cubes, adding a cup of salt, turning on the cold water, and running the disposal until it breaks up all of the ice.
- Periodically sanitize the disposal drain by pouring in a half cup of baking soda and a cup of white vinegar. Let the mixture fizz for a few minutes, then pour boiling water down the drain.



*Never put fibrous or starchy items, such as banana peels, potato peelings, rice, egg shells, poultry skins, celery, or coffee grounds in the disposal.*

*If the garbage disposal is not working, ensure it is plugged into the outlet securely, then hit the "reset" button on the bottom of the disposal.*



## Did You Know...

You can make this easy fruit and veggie spray to help clean off pesticide residue.

In a glass spray bottle, mix one tablespoon of lemon juice, two tablespoons of white vinegar and one cup of water. Shake thoroughly before spraying your produce.

Rub mixture in by hand, or with a vegetable brush, and rinse thoroughly in cold water.



# Home Maintenance 101

## Heating

- Schedule an annual professional service before the cold season.
- At the start of cooler weather, turn the thermostat to heat and listen for the furnace to turn on to be sure that the heating system is working properly.
- Check filters in forced-air heating systems once per month and change every three to six months, depending on usage.
- Once every two years, hire a professional to bleed valves on hot-water radiators to release air that may be trapped inside to increase heating system efficiency.



*Replace the furnace filter regularly for maximum efficiency and improved indoor air quality.*

## Kitchen Refrigerator

- Clean door gaskets twice per year with a vinegar cleaning solution and an old toothbrush to help keep the door seal working well.



*Set refrigerator temperature to between 37 and 40 degrees Fahrenheit and set the freezer temperature to 0 degrees.*

*If refrigerator isn't cold enough, check that the condenser coils are free of dust.*

## Plumbing

- Schedule checkups with a professional for routine maintenance of plumbing systems and water heater.
- Schedule a snake of sewer lines via home's clean-out, as needed, to keep pipes free of clogs and buildup.
- Fix leaks and clogs immediately so simple repairs don't turn into expensive ones.
- Periodically inspect exposed pipes for any signs of cracks or leaks, and if you detect problems have the pipes repaired immediately.



*Learn locations of all shutoff valves, including washing machine, sinks, toilets, and water heater, as well as all outside clean-outs, and water main shutoff valve.*

*For leaks from plumbing fixtures, turn off the valve bringing water to the fixture or turn off the home's main water shutoff valve to prevent secondary water damage.*

*If you live where temperatures reach freezing, wrap exterior and exposed plumbing pipes with heat tape and check them regularly.*

## Plumbing Stoppages

- Install properly fitting drain screens and sink stoppers to prevent food, hair, and other items from going down your drains.
- For minor clogs or slow drains, try pouring a half cup of salt down the drain followed by boiling water, then flush with hot water. For stubborn clogs, try a non-toxic drain cleaner such as a solution of baking soda and vinegar.



*Never pour fats, grease, cooking oils, or butter down the drain since they can harden in your pipes and cause clogs.*

*Never flush cotton balls, swabs, hair, or wet wipes down a toilet. They don't dissolve and can cause clogs.*



## Did You Know...

Having a cat or dog can relieve stress and lower blood pressure. Having a First American home warranty to cover your appliances and home systems can help relieve stress too. You'll be protected from unexpected repair or replacement bills for covered items, and you can place service requests online or by phone, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

We're not saying a home warranty will benefit your health, but we will take care of repairing or replacing covered items so that you can spend more time playing with your cat or dog!





# Home Maintenance 101

## Range - Electric

- Regularly check the prongs of the burner and the socket for charring and replace the socket if needed.
- Use only a solid element or all-surface cleaner for solid surface, smooth-top, or solid metal burners without coils.



*With a non-working burner, try replacing it with one that does work to test the element.*

*If all burners have stopped working, check that the range is plugged in, and/or check the circuit breaker to see if the one powering the range is flipped to the off position.*

## Range - Gas

- Clean gas stoves made with stainless steel tops with a degreasing cleaner and only non-scratch pads.
- If cooktop burner doesn't light, check that pilot light is lit. If it is out, follow the range manual's instructions for relighting the pilot light.
- If pilot light won't remain lit, be sure the burners are turned off and try using a small wire brush to clean out the pilot port.



*If you smell gas, be sure the burners are off and open doors and windows to air out the room. If the smell of gas persists, immediately call local gas company.*

*Learn where your home's gas shutoff valve is in case of emergency, and how to turn off gas at the valve. If you turned off the gas, contact your gas company to schedule a professional to come out and safely turn gas back on again.*

## Septic Tank Pumping/System

- Have septic system professionally inspected annually to determine a recommendation for scheduling regular septic tank pumping and maintenance.
- Have septic tank pumped out by a licensed professional. Regular pumping is vital to properly maintaining the system. This may be covered by your home warranty.
- Schedule regular sewer main snaking to prevent main line stoppages, particularly in areas where tree roots cause problems.



*Learn location of septic tank and leach field. Keep a sketch of it with other service maintenance records in your Homeowner Manual.*

*Keep records of repairs, pumping, inspections, permits issued, and maintenance.*

*Keep septic tank cover accessible for pumping inspections and install risers if necessary.*

## Sewage Ejector Pump

- Schedule annual inspections and have the pump serviced regularly by a licensed professional.



*If possible, set up the sewage ejector pump on its own circuit to ensure continuous power and avoid having to share power with other household systems.*

*Consider having a professional install a backup generator in the event of power outages.*

*If it's time to replace a sewage ejector pump, consider installing a model equipped with sensors that provide an alarm for problems.*



## Did You Know...

All of these items important to your kitchen's function and comfort may be covered by your First American home warranty. Check your contract for your specific coverage.

- Refrigerator
- Oven/Range/Cooktop
- Instant Hot Water Dispenser
- Garbage Disposal
- Electrical
- Dishwasher
- Built-in Microwave
- Trash Compactor
- Wine Refrigerators
- Ceiling Fans
- HVAC
- Ductwork
- Water Heater
- Well Pump
- Septic Tank System
- And more...



# Home Maintenance 101

## Spa/Pool Equipment

- Hire a professional annually before summer to clean pool, change filters, and inspect the pool's pump equipment for potential problems.
- Clean leaves and debris daily from the pool storm drain and filter to prevent blockages.
- Skim debris from pool water surface daily.



*Keep a pool's water level about halfway up the skimmer opening at all times.*

*Before closing up the pool for winter, be sure to remove any standing water from the pool's plumbing lines.*

## Trash Compactor

- Check manufacturer's guidelines for when you should replace the air filter in trash compactors that feature one.



*To keep bacteria from food and garbage from building up, unplug the compactor and clean the inside every six months with a vinegar solution, then thoroughly wipe dry.*

## Water Heater

- Once per year, hire a professional to flush the water heater tank to remove sediment and check the pressure relief valve to make sure it's in proper working order. Sediments can cause the water heater to work harder and take longer to heat water.



*Set the temperature between 115 and 120 degrees Fahrenheit to reduce energy costs and protect the tank from overheating.*

*The anode rod protects the water heater from corrosion and should be replaced every few years, or according to manufacturer's guidelines.*

*If there is no hot water and the water heater uses gas, check the pilot light. If it is out, contact the gas company to relight it.*

*If the water heater uses electricity, check that the circuit breaker is flipped to the on position. Reset circuit breaker if needed.*

## Well Pump

- Have the well pump cleaned and inspected once per year in spring or before cold weather arrives and be sure to have the inspector test the water quality as well.



*Consider having a professional install a backup generator for the well pump in the event of power outages.*



## Did You Know...

Salt water pools have higher upfront costs for installation, but can require less maintenance in the long term.

One reason that a salt water pool requires less overall maintenance than a chlorine pool is because its chemical levels are easier to balance. And although a salt water pool still contains chlorine, it requires a different type that is derived from salt and needs fewer chemicals. This may be the main reason for a salt water pool's appeal – swimming in one is gentler on the eyes and skin than its chlorinated counterpart.

Maintenance can be less expensive overall, but keep in mind that salt water generators usually need to run more than a typical filter for a chlorine pool so energy bills may be higher.





# Shutoff Valves and Switches

## Do you know the locations for all your home's shutoff valves?

Stay safe. Know the locations so you can act quickly when needed.



### Gas

Your home's gas shutoff valve is typically located near your gas meter. You will need a large crescent wrench to turn off the gas. Once the gas is off, do not try to turn it back on yourself. Call your utility company or another qualified professional. If you smell gas or suspect a leak, leave the area immediately and call your utility company.



### Electricity

Locate your home's main circuit panel or electrical service box. Open the panel and see if all of the breakers are lined up. If they are, the power loss is not because of a tripped circuit. If you see a circuit breaker out of alignment, turn it off, then back on (aligned with the rest of the breakers).



### Water, Exterior

The main water shutoff valve for your house looks like a large, metal valve with a sturdy handle. An outside water shutoff valve is usually located below the hose bibb in the front of your house, or in the enclosure that houses an outside water heater.



### Water, Interior

In most homes, each plumbing fixture has a shutoff valve. Learn where shutoff valves are located for the kitchen sink, dishwasher, bathroom sinks, toilets, and washing machine.



### Water, Irrigation

Although irrigation systems are not covered by your home warranty, it is important to know how to turn off the water to your irrigation system. The main shutoff valve for most irrigation systems can be found between your home's main water supply shutoff and the irrigation controller, which is typically installed in your basement or garage. If the main shutoff is outside, it will be near a faucet bibb. You may need adjustable pliers.



### Did You Know...

Performing routine inspections of your irrigation system can save you time and money.

A clogged sprinkler head or a torn line can damage your landscape and affect your water bill. Periodic visual inspection can identify broken heads, broken lines, or water pressure issues. Sometimes repair is as easy as cleaning or replacing components such as sprinkler heads or hose bibbs.



# Homeowner Manual

## Keep track of your home's important records.

A homeowner manual lets you keep track of all improvements, updates, and upgrades you make to your home. Start by collecting and organizing important materials in a binder or expandable folder, including this Maintenance Guide. Add pockets or sleeves to easily organize receipts, manuals, floor plans, warranties, and so on. Here are suggestions for what else to include:

- Home system and appliance instructions, maintenance records, and if you have one, a copy of your First American home warranty contract. You can also include service call information, repairs, and contact information.
- Maintenance receipts and contact information for carpet cleaning, HVAC service, garage door opener repair, chimney cleaning, gutter repair, roof inspection/repair, solar panel cleaning, and more.
- Roof repair records including company contact information, type of roofing material, color and manufacturer data, and warranty, if applicable.
- Service provider contacts with whom you've had good experiences, such as painters, gardeners, and pest control pros. Include business cards if available.
- Seasonal maintenance records, such as gutter cleaning/repair, painting, repairing decks and walkways, HVAC filter replacements, sprinkler systems, and window cleaning, including slides and screens.
- Interior improvements and additions such as overhead lighting, fans, smart thermostats, storage systems, and dimmer switches, as well as low-flow toilets and shower heads. Include any refinishing/replacing of floors or cabinets.
- Exterior improvements such as landscaping and sprinkler systems, exterior lighting, solar panels, window upgrades, pool resurfacing, fencing, decking, tree removal, and so on.
- Maps of exterior locations for shutoffs for the main water, gas, and electrical, as well as the interior electrical panel. If your home is on a well or septic system, map the well, septic tanks, and leach field/lines. If applicable, include location of solar panel control/displays and sprinkler junction box.
- Programming instructions for security systems and codes and sprinkler system manuals.
- Neighborhood information such as Homeowners' Association (HOA) guidelines and fees and how to contact your HOA, if applicable.
- Pouch for keeping track of items such as labeled keys for a gas fireplace, mailbox, or storage shed.
- Records on the color formula or labels from cans of leftover interior and exterior paints.



### Did You Know...

**There are safe ways to store and dispose of old paint.** To store paint you may use again, the first step is to remove any excess paint trapped in the rim of the can, then securely seal the can. Once cleaned, turn the can upside down to maintain the seal over the long term. Store on a low shelf inside a storage cabinet in the garage.

To dispose of non-latex paint you will not use again, check your local garbage or recycle company website to see if they schedule haul-away days for paints and other toxic chemicals. Also check community paint recycling options in your area.



# Maintenance & Repair Log

Use this worksheet to track the age of your home's equipment, when to schedule each home system or appliance checkup, and any dates of service or repair.

**Consider placing this worksheet in the front binder area of your Homeowner Manual for easy access and regular updates.**

Appliance of Home System	Age / Date Purchased	Maintenance Schedle and Repair log
Attic and Exhaust Fans		
Ceiling Fans		
Central Air Conditioning		
Central Vacuum System		
Clothes Dryer		
Clothes Washer		
Dishwasher		
Ductwork		
Electrical		
Garage Door Openers		
Garbage Disposal		
Heating		
Kitchen Refrigerator		
Plumbing		
Plumbing Stoppages		
Range – Electric		
Range – Gas		
Septic Tank Pumping/System		
Sewage Ejector Pump		
Spa/Pool Equipment		
Trash Compactor		
Water Heater		
Well Pump		

The information contained in this material is for general guidance only. Consult with a professional when appropriate. First American Home Warranty Corporation assumes no responsibility for damages, injuries suffered, or losses incurred, by the use of the information published in this guide.





# Troubleshooting

Helpful hints and solutions for troubleshooting scenarios for systems and appliances breakdowns.

## Heating

The Problem	Possible Cause	Possible Solution
No heat	No power to the heater. The blower belt is broken.	Check and reset breaker. Replace the belt.
Not enough heat to rooms.	The filter is dirty. The registers are dirty. A register is closed. Blocked ductwork. Separated ductwork. Duct damper position problem. Blower belt is loose.	Replace the filter. Clean the registers. Check and open all registers. Check and clear ductwork. Repair with duct tape. Adjust room dampers. Tighten blower belt.
Soot in the house.	The filter is dirty. The ducts are dirty. Heat exchanger may be cracked or damaged.	Replace the filter. Have the ducts professionally cleaned. Call a qualified service provider.
Heating unit is making an unusual noise.	A pulley may be loose. Blower motor belt may be worn out. Blower motor bearings are dry.	Check and tighten all pulley screws. Replace the belt and adjust the tension. Oil the bearings.

## Air Conditioner

The Problem	Possible Cause	Possible Solution
The unit has stopped operating.	There is no power to the unit.	Check and reset breaker.
The air isn't cool enough.	The condenser coil is dirty. The insulation has fallen off the feed lines. There is direct sun on the evaporator unit. The filter is clogged or dirty.	Clean the condenser unit so air can freely circulate around the coil fins. Replace the insulation. Create shade for the unit. Clean or replace the filter.
The unit cycles on and off.	The drain hose from the condenser pan is clogged.	Clear the hose so the water is able to flow freely.



# Troubleshooting

## Electrical System

The Problem	Possible Cause	Possible Solution
The lights do not work properly.	There is no power to the unit.	Check and reset breaker.
The outlets do not work properly.	There is no power to the outlets.  Too many appliances are plugged in and using electricity at the same time.	Check the circuit breakers to be sure they are set properly.  Reset the GFI outlet if applicable. Unplug all appliances and reset the breaker.

## Plumbing Pipes, Faucets and Fixtures

The Problem	Possible Cause	Possible Solution
A faucet outlet has a deteriorated finish or is broken.	Chemical or mineral deposits have caused damage.	Check and reset breaker.
The sink drains slowly.	A blockage of hair, soap scum, or grease exists.	Use a drain maintenance product available at your local hardware or grocery store.
Water does not run freely from the showerhead or faucet.	Chemical or mineral deposits have caused a restriction.	Clean the showerhead or faucet with vinegar.

## Water Heater (Electric)

The Problem	Possible Cause	Possible Solution
There is no hot water.	No power to the heater.  Defective or failed thermostats. Defective or failed heating elements. Sediment build-up in the tank.	Be sure the unit is plugged in and then check and reset the circuit breaker.  Test and replace thermostats. Test and replace heating elements. Drain and flush the tank.
There is not enough hot water.	The tank is too small. Defective heating element. Thermostats are defective or require adjustment. Insufficient insulation around thermostats. Hot water faucets are leaking.	Install a larger capacity tank. Test and replace heating element. Test and replace or adjust thermostats. Pack insulation around thermostats. Repair leaking faucets.
The water is too hot.	The thermostat is set too high. The heating elements are defective. Thermostats are defective.	Turn down the thermostat. Test and replace heating elements. Test and replace the thermostats.



# Troubleshooting

The water heater is leaking.	The seal on the heating element is defective.	Check and replace the seal.
	The safety valve is defective.	Check and replace the safety valve.
	The tank has a cracked liner or has rusted through.	Replace the water heater.
	A plumbing line or connection has failed.	Call a qualified plumber.
The heater is noisy.	Rust, scale, or sediment have developed in the tank or heating elements.	Drain and flush the tank to remove the sediment.
		Remove and clean the heating elements with vinegar.

## Water Heater (Gas)

The Problem	Possible Cause	Possible Solution
There is no hot water.	The pilot light is out.	Follow manufacturer's instructions to relight the pilot light.
	The pilot light will not stay on.	Make sure the gas valves are on and the thermocouple is near the pilot flame and connected to the gas control.
	The burner assembly is clogged.	Replace the thermocouple.
	Defective thermocouple.	Call a qualified service provider.
	No gas is reaching the burner.	Call a qualified service provider.
There is not enough hot water.	Thermostats are defective or require adjustment.	Test and replace or adjust thermostats.
	The tank is too small.	Install a larger capacity tank.
	The burner is clogged.	Call a qualified service provider.
	Hot water faucets are leaking.	Repair leaking faucets.
	Hot water pipes are not insulated.	Insulate the hot water pipes.
The water is too hot.	The thermostat is set too high.	Turn down the thermostat.
	Thermostats are defective.	Test and replace heating elements.
	The exhaust may be blocked.	Check the exhaust vent and clear it of any obstruction.





# Troubleshooting

## Garbage Disposal

The Problem	Possible Cause	Possible Solution
The motor will not turn on.	No power to the unit.	Make sure the unit is plugged in. Check and reset the circuit breaker.
	Defective on/off switch.	Check the wall switch, repair or replace.
	The overload switch has tripped.	Make sure the unit is not jammed and then push the red reset button.
The motor hums, but does not grind.	The blades are jammed.	Turn off the power and clear any items that are jamming the blades.
		Turn the blades manually to be sure they are no longer jammed.
		Push the reset button.
The disposal is not grinding properly.	There is not enough water.	Run cold water when using the disposal.
	Improper waste in the disposal.	Consult the disposal manual for a list of improper waste material.
The disposal leaks.	The sink or drain connection is loose.	Tighten the flanges or replace the gaskets.
The disposal trips a circuit breaker.	Too many appliances are on the same circuit.	The disposal should be on its own 15 amp circuit.
The disposal is making more noise than it should.	A hard object is in the unit.	Inspect and remove any hard objects with pliers or tongs.
	Disposal mounting screw has become loose.	Tighten the mounting screw where it attaches to the bottom of the sink flange.

## Microwave Oven

The Problem	Possible Cause	Possible Solution
The unit will not turn on.	No power to the unit.	Check and reset breaker.
The touch pad is not working.	The clock is not set.	Reset the clock.
	A programming sequence was entered improperly.	Press "Clear" on the touchpad and re-program.
There is a popping noise coming from inside the unit.	There is metal or metallic trim on an item in the unit.	Remove metal or metal-trimmed items from inside the unit.
	The unit was turned on with nothing in the unit.	Make sure you always have an item in the unit when you turn it on.



# Troubleshooting

## Dishwasher

The Problem	Possible Cause	Possible Solution
The dishwasher will not turn on.	The door is not closed properly.	Be sure the door is properly closed and latched.
	No power to the unit.	Be sure the unit is plugged in properly and reset the breaker.
	The door latch is defective.	Inspect the door latch, repair or replace as necessary.
	The control selector is in the wrong position.	Adjust the control to the correct "Start" position.
The dishwasher will not fill with water.	The water filter is clogged.	If equipped, clean the intake water filter.
	The overflow switch is defective.	If the switch sticks in the "full" position the unit will not fill with water.
	The water valve is not on.	Replace the switch. Make sure the valve in the feed line is on. Track the feed line until you find the valve.
	The timer has failed.	Replace the timer.
The dishwasher makes a funny noise.	A spray arm is hitting the dishes.	Make sure the dishes do not obstruct the spray arm(s).
	A knocking sound occurs from a defective water intake valve.	Replace the water intake valve.
The soap dispenser does not open.	Soap build up is interfering with proper operation.	Remove soap build up and clean with vinegar.
	The lid may be blocked.	Make sure the lid is not obstructed.
The dishes are wet.	There may be a problem with the heating element.	Make sure all the electrical connections around the element are secure and clean the element with vinegar.
	The timer is defective.	Replace the timer.
The dishwasher is leaking.	The door seal has failed.	Make sure the seal is clean and free of any soap buildup or waste. Clean or replace as necessary.
	The hose clamps are loose.	Check and tighten clamps.
	The door hinges have failed.	Replace the door hinges to regain a tight fit of the door.
	Liquid soap.	Switch to a powder soap.



# Troubleshooting

The dishes are still dirty.	The water is not hot enough.	Run hot water from the faucet and then turn the dishwasher on.  If the problem remains, call a qualified service provider.
	The dishes are not loaded properly.	Redistribute the dishes so they face the water spray and are not too close together.
	The soap is not effective.	Replace with new powder soap.
	Too much food was on the dishes prior to loading.	Rinse the dishes before loading.
The water continually runs.	The timer may be defective, the water intake valve has failed, or the overflow switch is not functioning properly.	Call a qualified service provider.
When the dishwashing cycles are complete there is standing water in the tub. (One or two cups of water is normal)	The drain hose may be kinked or obstructed.	Clear the drain hose and make sure it is not kinked.
	The pump is blocked or has failed.	Make sure the pump drain is not blocked. Call a qualified service provider as necessary.
	The kitchen sink drain may be clogged.	Both the dishwasher and garbage disposal may use common drain lines with the kitchen sink.  Run cold water and the disposal to clear any drain line blockage.

## Refrigerator

The Problem	Possible Cause	Possible Solution
No power to the unit.	The unit is not plugged in or the outlet is not working properly.	Make sure the unit is plugged in; use a portable appliance to verify the outlet is working properly.
	The breaker has tripped.	Check and reset the breaker.
The unit has power, but it is not cooling properly.	The condenser coils are dirty.	Clean the coils with a vacuum.
	The condenser fan is malfunctioning.	Check the fan and repair or replace as necessary.
	The thermostat is not set properly.	Adjust the thermostat as necessary.
	The door gasket is defective.	Replace the door gasket to eliminate cold air from escaping.
	The room temperature is very hot.	The unit may be operating properly, try to cool the room.
	Heavy frost accumulation.	Defrost the unit more frequently.





# Troubleshooting

The unit makes funny noises.	<p>The unit may not be level.</p> <p>The drain pan is rattling.</p> <p>The fan blades are hitting something.</p>	<p>Level the unit.</p> <p>Make sure the pan is not touching the sides or the compressor.</p> <p>Make sure the fan blades are not bent or obstructed.</p>
The unit ices up and will not defrost.	<p>The drains are clogged.</p> <p>The door gasket leaks or is damaged.</p> <p>The drain hose is damaged or cracked.</p>	<p>Clear the drains.</p> <p>Replace the door gasket.</p> <p>Replace the drain hose.</p>
The refrigerator leaks water.	The drain line is clogged or the drain pan is full.	Clear the drain line and empty the drain pan.
The refrigerator has a bad odor.	<p>The drain pan is dirty.</p> <p>There is spoiled food in the unit.</p>	<p>Clean and sanitize the drain pan.</p> <p>Remove any spoiled food; keep an open container of baking soda in the unit until the odor is gone.</p>

## Oven/Range/Cooktop (Electric)

The Problem	Possible Cause	Possible Solution
The range will not turn on.	The unit has no power.	Make sure the unit is plugged in, check and reset the breaker.
One of the burners does not turn on.	<p>The element is not properly "plugged in."</p> <p>The burner is defective.</p> <p>The burner wiring, terminal block or switch is defective.</p>	<p>Remove the burner and replace to a fully secured position, ensuring it is properly "plugged in."</p> <p>Remove the burner and plug it in to another burner position.</p> <p>If it still does not work, replace the burner.</p> <p>Test each part and replace as necessary.</p>
The oven timer is not working properly.	<p>The timer fuse is blown.</p> <p>There is a loose connection.</p> <p>The timer is bad.</p>	<p>Replace the fuse.</p> <p>Turn off the power and tighten all connections.</p> <p>Replace the timer.</p>
The oven overheats.	An oven vent could be clogged.	Clear the clog and replace the filter as necessary.
The oven does not maintain the set temperature.	<p>The door gasket is damaged and leaks.</p> <p>The calibration of the thermostat is not correct.</p>	<p>Replace the door gasket.</p> <p>Contact the manufacturer for recalibration instructions.</p>
A feature on the control panel does not work.	A fuse has blown.	Check accessory circuit fuse.
The self-cleaning function of the oven is not working.	The oven door is not locked.	Shut and lock the oven door and restart the self-clean cycle.



# Troubleshooting

## Oven / Range / Cooktop (Gas)

The Problem	Possible Cause	Possible Solution
No ignition to the oven or burners.	The pilot light is out. Gas is not turned on. The burner cap may not be set properly.	Relight the pilot. Make sure the gas valve is turned on; consult the gas company if necessary. Make sure the cap matches the burner size and is sealed properly.
The burner will not stay on.	The pilot port is clogged. The pilot is getting blown out.	Turn off the gas and clear the port. Avoid drafts near the range.
The burner flame is not steady.	The burner may be clogged. The gas mixture is incorrect.	Clean the burner surface and port. Call the local gas company.
The oven does not bake evenly.	Circulation in the oven is not adequate. The exhaust vent may be clogged. The oven was not preheated. The door seal leaks.	If you cover a shelf with aluminum foil make sure you have at least 2 inches of clearance on the sides and back. Clear the vent and replace the filter as necessary. Preheat the oven before baking. Replace the door seal.
There is a gas odor coming from the unit.	The pilot light has gone out. The gas line is leaking.	Open any windows and doors to create good ventilation and relight the pilot. Call the gas company immediately.

## Trash Compactor

The Problem	Possible Cause	Possible Solution
The unit will not turn on.	No power to the unit. The safety lock is not on. The drawer is open.	Make sure the unit is plugged in, check and reset the breaker. Turn on the safety lock. Make sure the drawer is securely shut.
The trash is not fully compacted.	The pulley, gears or drive chain is loose or broken. The ram has jammed.	Check and tighten or replace as necessary. Oil the ram and replace the screws if stripped out.
A breaker trips during the cycle.	There are too many appliances on one circuit. There may be a short in the power cord.	Unplug other appliances, check and reset the breaker. The unit may need its own circuit. Make sure the cord, plug and switch are operating properly.



# Troubleshooting

The unit makes loud noises.	The unit needs to be lubricated. Some parts may have come loose. The drive chain is loose.	Oil the unit. Check and tighten all screws and bolts. Tighten the drive chain.
The unit has a bad odor.	The deodorant is empty. The deodorant dispenser is clogged.	Replace deodorant. Clear the nozzle with a thin piece of wire or remove and run the nozzle under warm water.

## Clothes Washer

The Problem	Possible Cause	Possible Solution
The unit will not turn on.	No power to the unit.	Make sure the unit is plugged in, check and reset the breaker.
The unit will not fill with water.	The water valves are turned off. Water line filters are clogged. There is a kink in a water hose.	Make sure the water valves are turned on. Make sure the hose filters are clear. Check and straighten both water hoses.
The unit fills with water, but will not run.	The tub may be overfilled.  The timer is defective.  The lid is not closed properly.  The drive belt may be loose or broken.	Remove some laundry and redistribute the remaining laundry in the tub.  Wait 15 minutes to allow the machine to reset.  Replace the timer.  Make sure the lid is closed and the safety switch is working.  Tighten or replace the drive belt as necessary.
The unit is leaking water.	The hose connections are loose.  Possible failed parts: gasket, mixing valve, hoses, overflow switch, or sensor.	Check and tighten the hose connections.  Check and replace the defective parts as necessary.
The unit vibrates more than it should.	The laundry load is unbalanced.  The machine may not be level.	Distribute the clothes evenly.  Level the machine.
The unit will not drain.	The lid is not closed properly.  The drain hose may be kinked.  The position of the drain hose may be too high.	Because the unit spins and drains at the same time, be sure the lid is closed.  Check and straighten the drain hose.  If the drain hose is more than 4 feet above floor level and it cannot be lowered easily, call a qualified service provider.



# Troubleshooting

## Clothes Dryer

The Problem	Possible Cause	Possible Solution
The unit will not turn on.	The unit is not getting power.	Make sure the unit is plugged in, check and reset the breaker.
	There is a bad switch or timer.	Check and replace as necessary.
The motor runs, but the drum does not turn.	The belt drive is loose or broken.	Tighten or replace the belt.
	The drum is stuck.	Check the drum and remove any obstructions.
	The drum support mechanism is broken.	Check and replace as necessary.
The clothes don't dry.	The lint trap or exhaust vent is clogged.	Clear the trap or vent.
	There are too many clothes in the dryer.	Remove some clothes.
	The door gasket leaks.	Check and replace the door gasket.
	The heating element may not be operating properly.	Check the heating element, thermostat and timer and replace as necessary.
The unit will not shut off.	The unit has a bad timer.	Check and replace the timer.

## Septic System

The Problem	Possible Cause	Possible Solution
The waste lines in the home are draining slowly or are backing up.	The septic tank is full.	Inspect the septic tank to confirm the tank is full and that there are no other blockages in the waste lines.
		Have the tank pumped. To reduce the number of times the tank will require pumping, maintain the system properly to insure the natural bacterial breakdown of the tank contents.
		Be aware that most of today's soaps and bleaches will adversely affect the healthy growth of bacteria in the tank.

## Water Well System

The Problem	Possible Cause	Possible Solution
The well is not producing enough water.	There has been a reduction in the aquifer.	Reduce water use or drill another well that taps into a different aquifer.
	Compare the current static water level with the static water level records at the time the well was drilled. A lower level will confirm depletion in the aquifer. Neighboring well interference.	Identify neighboring wells located in the same aquifer. Reduce pumping rates as required.



# Troubleshooting

An unnatural build up of residue or mineral scale on household plumbing fixtures.	There is a biofilm or mineral build up in the well casing, well screen or pump intake.	Shock chlorinate the well and water system for the biofilm buildup, usually once or twice a year. Have a drilling contractor clean, scour and acid treat the well in order to remove the mineral buildup.
Sediment in the water.	Sediment is getting through the perforated casing or screen.	Contact a qualified drilling contractor.

## Pool and Spa

The Problem	Possible Cause	Possible Solution
The circulating pump will not turn on or is not operating properly.	There is no power to the circulating pump.	Make sure the unit is plugged in, check and reset the circuit breaker.
	The water level in the pool or spa may be too low and the pump has lost a prime.	Raise the water level in the pool or spa and prime the pump by adding a few gallons of water to the pump basket and follow instructions in your pump manual.
The heater is not working.	The unit is not receiving gas or power.	Be sure the gas valve is in the correct position, check and reset the circuit breaker.
	The filter is dirty.	Clean the filter with a backwash process or remove and clean the filter cartridge.
The filter is not operating properly.	The filter is dirty.	Keep the filter clean.

## Notes





# Troubleshooting





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