

Home Maintenance Myths You Shouldn't Believe

If you still believe any of the following home maintenance myths, it's time to find out the truth.

Even experienced homeowners sometimes perpetuate home maintenance myths that waste time and money, and can even cause damage to the home . **If you believe any of the following home maintenance myths, it's time to find out the truth.**



"New" means "maintenance-free"

When looking for a home, people often choose new construction or a newly renovated home, largely due to the notion that new means no maintenance. A brand new home, or a home that has been completely renovated, should last at least a few years before the materials, systems, and appliances start to show wear and tear that requires maintenance, right?

False. On the one hand, even brand new, high-quality materials or appliances can be installed improperly, have factory defects, or perform below expected tolerances. On the other hand, maintenance isn't just for old things: Properly maintaining, cleaning, and servicing your roof, gutters, air conditioning system, and everything else in your home from the start will help your home last longer and be more efficient throughout its life.

Check smoke alarms

Smoke alarms save lives when a fire breaks out. But they can only do that if they're working properly, so checking your fire protection system regularly—at least once a month—is a good idea.

But if you're testing it by pressing that big TEST button, you're really just testing the smoke alarm. That's important—a smoke alarm you can't hear is not useful—but it's not enough. You also need to test the sensors to make sure the smoke detector is actually working. You can do this the old-fashioned way by lighting a match near the smoke alarm, or you can buy a product specifically designed to test these sensors.



More insulation = better

In reality, the ideal amount of insulation is carefully calculated based on the material, space, and area, among other factors. For example, putting too much insulation between attic joists can compress the insulation too much, making it less effective. An over-insulated home will experience higher humidity, leading to visible condensation and the potential for mold growth. Air quality can also be affected, and you may notice extreme temperature swings between rooms because the home cannot 'breathe.'

Self-cleaning device

It might sound logical when someone tells you that you don't need to clean your washing machine or dishwasher because you're actually running them through a soap rinse cycle every time you use them. What good can adding detergent and water do to the inside of a machine that's constantly soaked in detergent and water? And how does dirt build up there?

But appliances like dishwashers don't clean themselves. In fact, over time, they can get downright dirty. Wash cycles leave behind residue—slime that's not easy to wash away. Over a (relatively short) period of time, this residue builds up into a nasty layer of gunk that can lead to mold, odors, and reduced appliance performance.



Room cooling fan

Ceiling fans are powerful tools for making your home more comfortable. They help circulate air, moving hot air down and cool air up (or vice versa, depending on the season). And if you're sitting under one, that breeze can be very soothing when you're hot.

That cooling effect makes people think that ceiling fans actually cool the room, but that's not true. The reason ceiling fans make you feel cooler is called the "wind chill effect." The movement of air speeds up the evaporation of sweat from your skin, which helps cool you down. But ceiling fans don't actually cool the room, which means leaving them on when you're not in the room is a waste of money and energy. In fact, ceiling fans that are left running for long periods of time get hot and can actually raise the temperature in the room.

Cut the grass short

With many people thinking that a lush green lawn is the epitome of the Good Life, you would think that people would be excited about the amount of work it takes to maintain one. You'd be wrong – most people hate lawn maintenance and would pay a high price to not have to mow their lawn regularly. This has led to the myth that if you mow your lawn super short, it will take longer to grow back.

In a sense, this is true—but cutting your lawn too short can kill it. It's better to mow regularly, but leave it a little higher—about 3 inches is a good starting point for most people.

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