

Austin Homeowner Annual Maintenance Checklist

Seven tasks that protect your home from fire, flooding, foundation damage, and costly repairs. Check them off once a year — or set reminders so nothing slips through the cracks.

1. Dryer Vent Cleaning

1x per year (min)

- Disconnect dryer from wall duct
- Blow out duct from inside with leaf blower or shop vac
- Clear exterior vent cap of lint buildup
- Reconnect and run dryer — check that air flows freely outside

■ If ignored: Fire risk — lint is highly flammable

2. AC Filter Replacement

Monthly (standard 1" filter)

- Locate filter slot on return air vent or air handler
- Note size printed on old filter before discarding
- Install new filter with airflow arrow pointing toward unit
- Set phone reminder for next month

■ If ignored: Clogged filter = system overwork, coil freeze, full failure

3. Foundation Inspection

Annually

- Check interior doors/windows — do they stick or not latch?
- Look for diagonal cracks at window/door corners
- Inspect exterior brick mortar and foundation line for cracks
- Ensure irrigation is consistent — no long dry/wet cycles

■ If ignored: Austin clay soil shifts constantly — catch it early

4. Water Heater Flushing

Annually (every 6 mo. w/ hard water)

- Turn off cold water supply and set to pilot/vacation mode
- Attach garden hose to drain valve, run to drain
- Open valve — drain until water runs clear
- Close valve, restore water supply, return to normal setting

■ If ignored: Austin hard water = sediment buildup = early failure

5. HVAC Condensate Drain Line

Every 6 months

- Locate condensate drain access port near air handler
- Pour 1 cup white vinegar or diluted bleach solution into port

- Check drain pan for standing water — wipe dry if present
- Confirm float switch is functional (shuts off if pan fills)
- If ignored: Clogs cause overflow — mold in ductwork, ceiling damage

6. Smoke & CO Detectors

Monthly test / Replace per schedule

- Press test button on every detector — all should sound
- Check manufacture date inside unit — replace if 10+ yrs (smoke) / 5-7 yrs (CO)
- Replace batteries annually (or use 10-year sealed units)
- Confirm coverage: every level + within 10 ft of each bedroom
- If ignored: CO is odorless — a working detector is non-negotiable

7. Gutters & Downspouts

2x per year (spring + fall)

- Clear all debris from gutters — check for sags or damage
- Flush gutters with hose — water should flow freely to downspouts
- Confirm downspout extensions direct water 4–6 ft from foundation
- Check for standing water pooling near the house after rain
- If ignored: Overflow saturates soil against foundation — Austin's #1 foundation cause

Notes / Contractors / Service Dates