

HANDLE WITH CARE



They're big, metal and not exactly huggable, but take good care of them and they'll love you for a lifetime.

Your home appliances can be some of the most expensive items in your home, but fortunately they are also easy to maintain. By committing yourself to a little regular maintenance and cleaning, you'll be able to prevent grime — and problems — from building up, while also prolonging the life of your appliances.

The number one rule for keeping your appliances clean, rust-free and running smoothly: wipe up spills as soon as they happen. The longer a mess is allowed to sit, the more likely it is that odours get baked in, food gets lodged in holes, enamel wears down and rust takes hold.

Oven and Range

If your oven starts smoking, it's time to put some elbow-grease into it. Use the self-cleaning function when available, or clean the interior with an oven cleaner like Easy Off.

Cooktops receive the most abuse, so clean them regularly. Remove racks and burner grates and soak them in the sink. Wash with a soft brush to remove cooked-on food.

Microwave

To clean the most stubborn microwave stains, place a cup of water inside and heat on high for three minutes. Once the cooking cycle is finished, leave the door closed for another five minutes to allow the steam to permeate the stain, then wipe down the interior with a sponge.

Refrigerator

Condenser coils gradually become clogged with dust and pet hair, reducing the efficiency of your fridge. To clean the coils, use a vacuum wand or coil brush (available at hardware stores). To access the coils, you can find them on the backside of older refrigerators; on newer models you should be able to access them from the front of the unit by removing the front grill.

Check the gaskets (seals) — loose gaskets waste energy and could raise the interior temperature of your fridge, allowing food to

become spoiled. Close the door on a dollar bill and tug on the exposed end of the bill; if it moves, the gasket needs to be replaced.

Stainless Steel Appliances

Stainless steel needs to be cleaned regularly not only for aesthetic reasons, but also to prevent corrosion. Fortunately, you can't "wear out" these surfaces by over-cleaning them, so attack that grime as often as the mood strikes you! Specially formulated stainless steel cleaners are available, but most dirt, stains and oils can be removed by scrubbing with a soft cloth dampened with undiluted white or cider vinegar. As long as you avoid abrasive cleaners or steel wool pads, your surfaces will continue to shine.

Washer and Dryer

Never pre-treat or lay treated clothes directly on the surface of your washer or dryer; detergents and solvents can corrode the enamel.

Use a long-nosed vacuum attachment to clean lint out of hard-to-reach crannies of your dryer, such as lint beneath the lint tray or in the heater box. If it is still difficult to reach, try wrapping a damp cloth around a wire clothes hanger and lightly brush the areas.

If your dryer's interior is stained with crayon or ink, you can clean it using an all-purpose cleaner. Then throw some old, clean rags or towels in for a cycle — they'll remove any excess residue.



Cleaning Schedule

Try this all-purpose cleaning solution for your appliances: mix 1 to 2 tablespoons baking soda in a quart of warm water; clean appliances with a non-abrasive sponge or cloth; rinse and wipe dry.



	Refrigerator	Range & Oven	Dishwasher	Dryer	Washing Machine
Monthly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wash interior with solution above; rinse and dry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clean oven panel, cook tops and knobs with a non-abrasive cleaner Clean drip pans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clean the filter (if your dishwasher has one, it's likely located at the bottom or beneath the spray arm) Clean the water sprayer by removing it and soaking it in warm white vinegar to loosen mineral deposits 	♦	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Run for a cycle with hot water, adding 2 cups of chlorine bleach (or white vinegar) and ½ cup of detergent at the beginning of the cycle to remove detergent build-up and kill germs If you have hard water, close and reopen water faucets to keep mineral build-up from clogging the hoses
Quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clean interior and door gaskets with baking soda solution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check door gaskets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check gaskets for cracks and gaps in the seal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check gaskets for cracks and gaps in the seal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clean interior and door gaskets with baking soda solution
Twice a Year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unplug the refrigerator and clean the coils with a coil brush or vacuum attachment If you have water and ice dispensers, replace the filters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clean interior of oven 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place 1 cup of white vinegar in each rack of the dishwasher and run for one cycle Clean spray arms and poke a stiff wire through the holes in the arms to clear away mineral deposits or lodged food Lift out strainer and scrub with warm, soapy water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove accumulated lint from the exhaust duct (located at the back of the dryer) 	♦
Annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slide refrigerator out of its space and vacuum the area beneath it to clean out dirt and hair (left alone, it will clog the coils) 	♦	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspect water supply connector for bulges and kinks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cleanse the tub of the dryer with a sponge and all-purpose cleaner Remove lint from the vent that leads to the outside by using a dryer vent brush (available at appliance and hardware stores) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cleanse the tub with a sponge and all-purpose cleaner Check water hoses for cracks, corroded fittings and leaks; replace if necessary Inspect water supply connector for bulges and kinks

If your appliance is behaving suspiciously, try testing it before calling for service—the suggestions below could save you the time and money of a service visit.

The Litmus Test

Have a fridge with a fever? 3°C is ideal for the fridge and -18° for the freezer. Place an outdoor or refrigerator thermometer inside for an hour in order to check suspect temps.

Also make sure that the rear of the refrigerator is several inches from the wall, and that nothing is on top of it at the rear that could block the heat coming from off the condenser coils.

How accurate is your oven? Test your oven's thermostat by placing an accurate oven thermometer in the centre of a 175°C oven. After 20 minutes, check the temp. If it's more than 35° too high or low, replace the control. If the difference is less than 35°, pull the oven control knob off and find the calibration screw. Tighten or loosen the screw, and continue to test until the temperature is correct.

Dirty dishes staying dirty? Make sure the water is hot enough—it should be at least 60°C. If it isn't, turn the thermostat on the hot water heater up.

Also, make sure the lower spray arm is unobstructed and is turning freely and the bottom inside of is clean and free of debris.

If your dryer isn't doing its job, make sure that the cord is plugged in and is not defective. Next, check the circuit breaker, clean the lint trap, and remove any lint from the exhaust duct.

Make sure the dryer has not pushed back against the rear exhaust duct causing an air flow restriction.

Have a walking washer? Fix the imbalance by making sure all four legs are touching the floor. Most washers have adjustable front (and sometimes back) legs with a lock nut. You can adjust the leg to the proper height, and then tighten the lock nut up against the body of the machine to keep the leg from rotating. Once the machine is level, the "roaming" problem should be resolved.