



# HOME MAINTENANCE — TIPS AND TRICKS —

As anyone who has gone from renting to owning can tell you, taking care of a house is hard work. From your AC unit to your roof, maintenance is essential.



In fact, most homeowners enlist the help of professionals for regular maintenance tasks.

According to data collected by bankrate.com:

**63%**

of homeowners use at least one recurring home maintenance service

**35%**

of homeowners use two or more recurring home maintenance services

Hiring professionals for every job can get pricey. Instead, separate the upkeep and upgrades you can do yourself from the jobs that require a licensed expert.



## HOW MUCH SHOULD YOU BUDGET FOR MAINTENANCE?

From plumbing to electrical, there are many home projects that require a professional. Setting aside some money for upkeep is just part of being a homeowner.

When planning your home maintenance budget, take these factors into account:

**CLIMATE**

If you live in a cold-weather climate, your home's maintenance needs will be different than a homeowner in the desert Southwest.

**HISTORY**

All homes need some degree of upkeep, but an older home may need more love and care than a brand-new home.

**REGION**

Outside of just the weather, some areas of the country have issues with termites, while others must deal with the impact of tectonic activity.

Our recommendation is that you set aside 1.5 - 2% of your home's value annually to cover the cost of maintenance and repairs:

HOME VALUE	PERCENTAGE SAVED	TOTAL SAVED
\$250,000	1% of home value	\$2,500
\$250,000	1.5% of home value	\$3,750
\$250,000	2% of home value	\$5,000

Many realtors advocate for at least a 1% home maintenance budget. However, there are advantages to saving more, not less, if you are able:

**ROLL OVER**

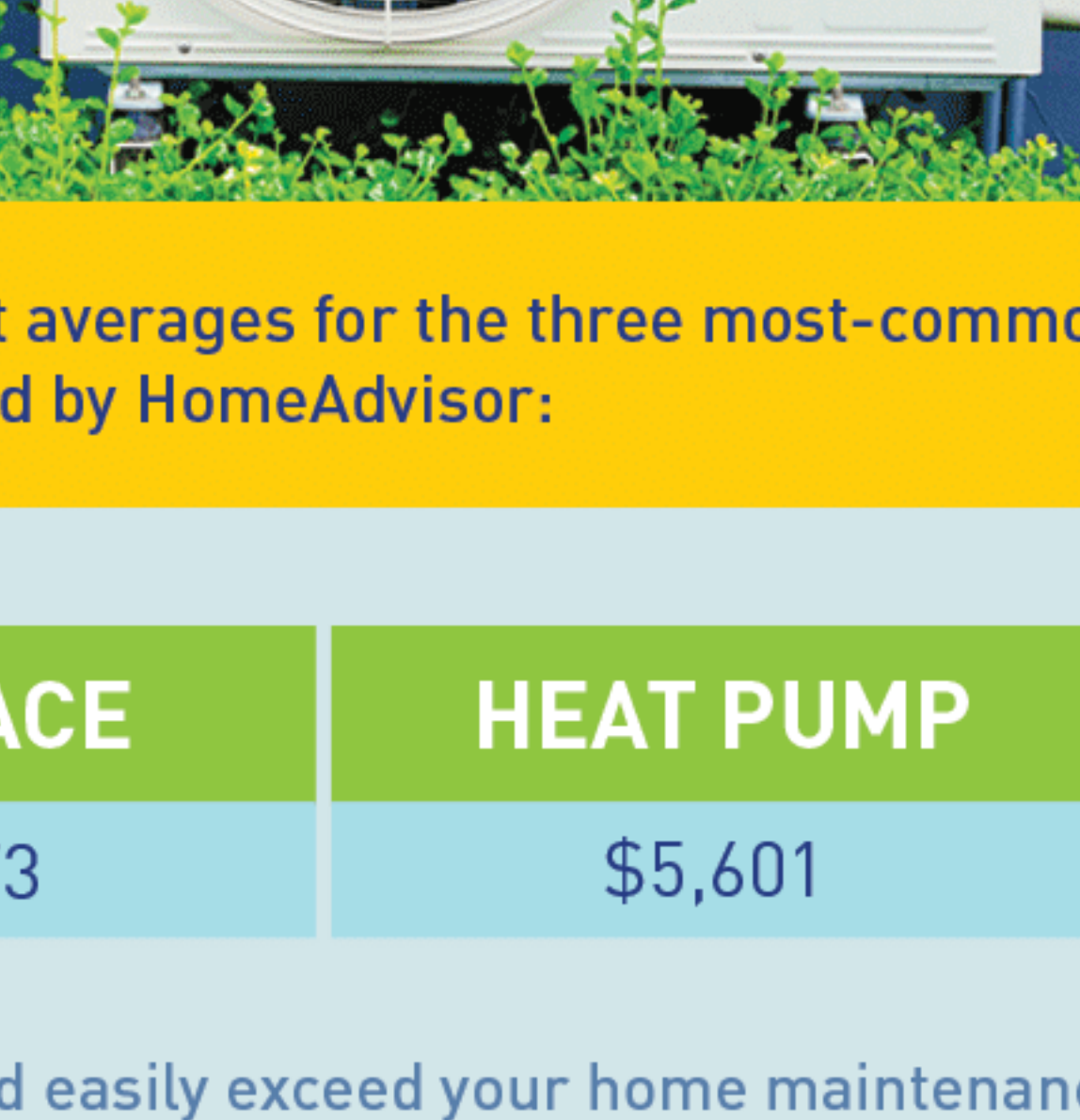
Your home maintenance account isn't use-it-or-lose-it. You can roll over any unspent savings to the next year, allowing you to save for major home projects.

**EMERGENCIES**

A major expense, such as replacing your air conditioner, can easily exhaust your 1% savings budget.

## FOCUS ON YOUR HVAC SYSTEMS FIRST

Your air conditioner and furnace are critical to your home. They are also expensive to replace, which means your top priority should be keeping them in good condition.



In fact, here are the national replacement cost averages for the three most-common HVAC systems, as compiled by HomeAdvisor:

AIR CONDITIONER	FURNACE	HEAT PUMP
\$5,428	\$4,273	\$5,601

Replacing your cooling or heating system could easily exceed your home maintenance budget. This is just one of the reasons you should schedule regular tune-ups.

Cooling and heating maintenance not only reduces your risk of a breakdown in the coming summer or winter, but it also helps extend the use of your system past its typical lifespan.

AIR CONDITIONER	FURNACE	HEAT PUMP
15-20 years	13-20 years	14-15 years

Tune-ups also give your energy-efficiency a boost. This matters: the cost of cooling and heating your home is likely the largest portion of your monthly energy bill:

**47-50%**

The average homeowner in the United States spends about half their energy bills cooling or heating their home.

To schedule a tune-up in your area, call your local HVAC contractor.

## CUT YOUR ENERGY USE, SLASH YOUR ENERGY BILLS



Beyond scheduling seasonal tune-ups, there's a lot homeowners can do to make their homes more energy-efficient and lower their monthly energy bills. Consider these easy home projects:

**5-15%**

Just replacing or cleaning your air filters on a regular basis can boost your cooling or heating efficiency.

**10%**

The average homeowner can save 10% or more on their cooling and heating bills by installing a programmable thermostat.

**1° = 1%**

In the winter, for every degree cooler you keep your home, you can cut your energy bill by 1%. This means keeping your home five degrees colder when you're sleeping can save you 5% or more!

If you're ready to save even more, have a certified energy specialist survey your home. A whole-home energy audit can reveal where you can save energy and money.

**20%**

Having cracks and pinholes in your air ducts sealed can lower your cooling and heating costs by up to 20%.

**5-10%**

Adding weatherstripping to seal windows and doors can further reduce your HVAC costs by 5-10%.

**9-10%**

Replace your older lightbulbs with LED or CFL energy-efficient ones, and you could lower your electric bill by 9-10%.

## HOME MAINTENANCE PAYS OFF



Caring for your home—especially the exterior of your home—can have a big impact on your curb appeal. That matters! According to a 2018 study from the National Association of Realtors:

**99%**

of realtors said curb appeal is important for attracting a buyer

**79%**

of realtors said curb appeal was "very important."

For any prospective homeowner, buying a home is a big decision. Many buyers aren't going to drop out of a deal because the grass needs to be mowed.

But, a major air conditioner problem? In most cases, that's a dealbreaker—or at least something you'll need to pay for when you sell.

**7%**

of home sale contracts surveyed by the National Association of Realtors were terminated by the buyer—a majority of those over home inspection issues.

Keeping up with your maintenance checklist not only helps you save money now, but can also help you get more out of your home down the road.