

Checklist For The New Homeowner

Buying your dream home is just the beginning of your journey as a homeowner. Prior to moving into your new home, you'll have multiple tasks to take care of. A new homeowner checklist can be an invaluable tool that helps you prepare for your move and adjust to your new life. The following are some "must-have" items that you should be sure to include in your checklist.

Have Your Home Inspected

Although you probably had your home inspected prior to buying it, it is still a good idea to thoroughly inspect your home before you move in to ensure that there are no hidden leaks or other problems that could cause big headaches in the future. With a clipboard, pencil, and flashlight in hand, inspect your home's flooring, doors, windows, walls, basement, roof, attic, garage, and fireplace, among other areas. Make sure that everything from the light switches to the plumbing is working correctly.

Make a List of the Boxes You Have Packed

Make a list of all the boxes and items you've packed and where in your home you want them to go. Mark the boxes with labels like, "kitchen", "master bedroom", etc. so the movers know where to put your stuff.

Utilities

Prior to moving into your home, research utility providers in your area and compare the packages they offer. Make sure to start your utility contracts the day you move into your new home or the day before so you can have water, electricity, and gas from the first day.

Garbage

Call your city to find out what day of the week garbage is collected and what types of containers are required. You may also want to determine whether there are recycling programs in your community.

Smoke Alarms and Fire Extinguishers

Make sure that there are smoke alarms in every level of the house and that they are in good working order. Check your smoke alarms' batteries twice a year and replace your smoke alarms about every 10 years or so. In addition, make sure that there are fire extinguishers in rooms that pose a risk of fire, such as the kitchen and laundry room.

Install Energy-Saving Appliances

Qualify for up to \$500 in home improvement tax credits, increase the resale value of your home, and lower your utility bills by installing energy-saving appliances in your new home. Eligible products may include HVAC systems, doors and windows, washers and dryers, and programmable thermostats.

First-Aid Kit

Accidents can happen around the house, so purchase a first-aid kit for your new home and leave it somewhere convenient and accessible, such as your kitchen. A good home first-aid kit typically includes bandages, scissors, gloves, tape, gauze, non-latex gloves, aspirin, and a thermometer.

Tools

As a renter, if something breaks, you can just call your landlord up to have it fixed. As a homeowner, however, you need to have basic tools on hand to fix any minor problems that arise. Some tools you'll want to ensure are in your toolbox include a hammer, nails, drill, drill bits, screw drivers, tape measure, wrench, wire cutter, handsaw, pliers, and safety glasses.