

HVAC Preventive Maintenance Tips



Air conditioning and heating units are costly to replace. So, it's important to do some regular preventive maintenance on your home units. This maintenance can be done by the home owner and will help the unit last longer.

This maintenance should be done at least twice per year. I do it one time in the fall right after the leaves have fallen. And, once again in the spring just before the air conditioning is needed to beat down the summer heat.

Here are some tips to help you with this task:

1. Clear debris from around the outside unit. Eliminate any brush or leaves that are too close to the unit. When the unit turns on, brush and leaves may interfere with air circulation.
2. Look inside the condensing unit and remove any leaves or dirt that may have accumulated there. You may have to unscrew the top mesh to get into the unit. Once cleaned, make sure you put the top mesh back on.
3. Clean the condensing coil with a coil cleaner. Coil cleaners can be found at Lowe's or any HVAC store. Just spray it on and allow it to foam up. After 3-4 minutes, wash it off with a hose and water.



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4. Turn the unit on and inspect the fan blades. Check to see if they look like they are properly balanced. If the blade is bouncing around or making a lot of noise, call a professional repair service to fix it before further damage occurs.
5. After shutting the unit off, check the blower wheel. It should turn freely by hand and it should be free of dirt.
6. Inspect all of your wire connections with a screwdriver and make sure that they are all tight.
7. Inside you house, replace all of your air filters. This should be done about every three months.
8. Check the duct to your air conditioning system. You may have to climb into your attic or under your house to completely do this. Make sure all of the insulation around this duct is secure and not torn. Look for and repair any air leaks.

These are the simple preventive maintenance items that most homeowners can do themselves.

Of course, a professionally done preventive maintenance program will cover another 10-15 items that requires some special tools and electrical knowledge. If you can afford this (\$150-\$250/year), I would highly recommend that you call a HVAC Service in your area and ask them to come and inspect your unit. If you can't afford it, at least cover the eight items listed above - it could save you a lot money.

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