

# HouseFacts Home Departure Checklist

Use this checklist to prepare your home whenever you leave it vacant for an extended period. **To customize it for your property, open the Google Doc version and go to *File > Make a copy* so you can edit your own checklist.**

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## Heating, Cooling, and Utilities

- ☐ Adjust thermostat to safe settings (e.g., 55°F in winter, 78°F in summer).
- ☐ Shut off unnecessary utilities: water, gas, and electricity (if applicable).
- ☐ Unplug electronics and appliances to avoid phantom energy use or surges.
- ☐ Turn off water heater or set to vacation mode.

## Plumbing and Water Systems

- ☐ Shut off main water supply (if property will be vacant long-term).
- ☐ Drain pipes and appliances (especially in cold climates).
- ☐ Add non-toxic antifreeze to drains and toilets if winterizing a home without heat.
- ☐ Inspect for leaks and repair before leaving.

## Safety and Security

- ☐ Lock all doors, windows, and gates.
- ☐ Set alarms and test security systems.
- ☐ Install or check smart cameras and motion-activated lights.
- ☐ Set light timers to make the home look occupied.
- ☐ Notify a trusted neighbor, family member, or property manager of your absence.
- ☐ Stop or forward mail and deliveries.

## Household and Appliances

- ☐ Empty trash, recycling, and compost bins.  
Clear refrigerator and pantry of perishables.
- ☐ Clean kitchen counters and floors to prevent pests.
- ☐ Run garbage disposal and dishwasher before leaving.

- ☐ Check laundry appliances (remove clothes, empty lint trap).

## **Maintenance and Exterior**

- ☐ Clean gutters and downspouts if leaving during a storm-prone season.
- ☐ Inspect roof, windows, and doors for damage or leaks.  
Trim trees or branches near the home.
- ☐ Store or cover outdoor furniture, grills, and equipment.
- ☐ Secure sheds, garages, and outdoor storage areas.

## **Financial and Administrative**

- ☐ Set up auto-pay for utilities, insurance, and property taxes.
- ☐ Leave emergency contact information with a trusted person.
- ☐ Keep copies of important documents in a digital binder (warranties, receipts, service records).