

AC Maintenance Checklist

Checklist · 22 items · 6 sections

Monthly and seasonal AC maintenance checklist for homeowners. Covers central air, window units, and mini-splits: so your AC stays efficient and avoids costly breakdowns.

Open the editable version online:

<https://genechecklist.com/checklist/ac-maintenance-checklist>

MONTHLY

- Replace air filter (every 1-3 months: more often with pets or allergies)

HIGH

A dirty filter is the #1 cause of reduced efficiency and AC failure

- Check thermostat is working correctly: test cool mode
- Listen for unusual noises: rattling, squealing, or grinding
- Confirm all vents are open and unobstructed

SPRING STARTUP

- Clear debris from around outdoor condenser unit: 2 feet clearance on all sides

HIGH

Remove leaves, dirt, grass clippings, and any objects that accumulated over winter

- Gently rinse condenser coil fins with garden hose: inside out to clear dirt

HIGH

- Inspect condenser fins for bending: straighten with a fin comb if bent
- Check refrigerant lines (copper pipes) for insulation damage
- Clean condensate drain line: pour diluted bleach to prevent mold and clogs

HIGH

Clogged drain causes water damage and trips safety shutoff: do this every spring

- Test AC for 15 minutes: confirm cool air, no ice buildup on lines

HIGH

ANNUAL PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

- Schedule professional tune-up: book in March or April before technicians are booked

HIGH

- Professional checks refrigerant level: low refrigerant = leak (illegal to DIY refill)

HIGH

- Professional inspects electrical connections, capacitors, and contactors

HIGH

- Professional lubricates fan motor bearings
- Professional cleans evaporator coil (indoor coil)

HIGH

Dirty evaporator coil is a major cause of efficiency loss: hard to access without disassembly

WINDOW AC UNITS

- Remove window AC units from windows and store for winter

HIGH

- Clean window AC filter: rinse and dry before storage

HIGH

- Wipe exterior and coils of window unit before storing

MINI-SPLITS

- Clean mini-split filters: most require cleaning every 2 weeks during use

HIGH

- Wipe mini-split coils with soft brush: do not spray water on indoor unit

EFFICIENCY TIPS

- Upgrade to a smart thermostat: saves 10-15% annually on cooling costs
- Note unit age: central AC typically lasts 10-15 years; plan replacement proactively