

Room by Room Checklist for a Healthy Home

Take the first step! This checklist is a great way to start learning more about the conditions in your home that could be impacting your health and safety. You don't have to be an expert or a professional to complete this list. For more information on this material and recommended actions please visit:

www.hud.gov/healthyhomes or download the Healthy Homes Basics App to have a resource at your fingertips whenever you are ready.

1. Living, Dining, and Family Rooms

- If your home was built before 1978, check painted doors, windows, trim, and walls for lead
- Vacuum carpets regularly to reduce asthma triggers
- Move blind cords out of reach of children to prevent strangulation
- Check lighting and extension cords for fraying or bare wires
- Avoid having lighting and extension cords in floor pathways
- Purchase children's toys that do not have small parts for choking and do not contain lead
- Secure heavy items (televisions, bookcases) to walls to prevent tip overs

2. Kitchen

- If your home was built before 1978, check painted doors, windows, trim, and walls for lead
- Use a range hood exhausted to the outside (or open window) to ventilate while cooking
- Clean up liquids and foods right after spills
- Keep matches, glassware, knives, and cleaning supplies out of reach of children
- Avoid leaving food and water out overnight
- Mop floors weekly
- Place Poison Control Hotline number **(800) 222 – 1222** on the refrigerator and in every room
- Do not allow children to be in kitchen unsupervised when the range or oven is on

3. Bedroom(s)

- If your home was built before 1978, check painted doors, windows, trim, and walls for lead
- Move blind cords out of reach to prevent strangulation
- Make sure room has a working smoke detector
- Make sure the hall outside of bedrooms has a working carbon monoxide detector
- Use mattress and pillow covers, and vacuum carpets regularly to reduce asthma triggers

4. Entry

- Use floor mats by entry doors to reduce bringing in lead dust and other toxins into the home
- Remove shoes at entry if lead is present in the soil or paint
- Repair or install weather seals around the perimeter of doors

5. Bathrooms

- If your home was built before 1978, check painted doors, windows, trim, and walls for lead
- Use an exhaust fan to ventilate after shower or bath use
- Use slip resistant mats in showers and tubs
- Clean up water from floors right after spills
- Keep medicines and cleaning supplies locked away and out of reach of children
- If an older adult or someone with mobility or balance concerns is present in the home, install grab bars at toilets, showers, and tubs

6. Laundry

- Vent clothes dryer to the outside (through roof or wall, not into the attic)
- Keep laundry soaps and detergents out of reach of children
- Wash sheets and blankets weekly to reduce asthma triggers
- Regularly remove lint from dryer screen

7. Attic

- Clean up clutter to prevent rodents and insects from finding places to nest
- Check exposed attic insulation for asbestos and consult with an asbestos professional for removal
- Make sure eave and roof vents are not blocked with insulation

8. Basement (or Crawlspace)

- If your home was built before 1978, check painted doors, windows, trim, and walls for lead
- Check if the pipe that connects your home to the water main (the service line) is made from lead
- Seal holes in walls and around windows and doors to keep rodents and pests out of living spaces
- Clean up clutter to prevent rodents and insects from finding places to nest
- Test the home for radon. If test shows radon above EPA recommended levels, seal slab and foundation wall cracks, and if the problem persists, consider installing a radon mitigation system
- Keep pesticides and cleaning supplies locked away and out of reach of children
- Seal all cracks in slabs and foundation walls for moisture, radon, and pest protection

9. Garage

- Never run lawnmowers, cars, or combustion equipment inside the garage with garage door closed
- Keep gasoline, pesticides, and cleaning supplies out of reach of children.
- Clean up oil, gasoline, and other spills immediately
- If a floor drain is present, make sure it drains to well beyond the outside of the home

10. Outside

- If your home was built before 1978, check painted doors, windows, trim, and walls for lead
- If painted walls, doors, windows, or trim contain lead, keep children away from peeling or damaged paint and prevent children from playing around the ground next to the walls
- Remove leaves and debris from gutters regularly and extend downspouts to drain away from the house
- Replace missing or broken shingles or flashings
- Clean window wells of trash and debris
- Install and maintain fences completely around pools with openings less than 1/4 inch
- If your home was built before 1978, check hardboard siding for asbestos
- Make sure private wells are sealed and capped.
- Consider testing your well for pesticides, organic chemicals, and heavy metals before you use it for the first time.
- Test private water supplies annually for nitrate and coliform bacteria to detect contaminations problems early
- Do not leave open garbage containers near the home
- Repair broken glass in windows and doors.
- Seal holes in walls and around windows and doors to keep rodents and pests out of living spaces

11. General

- If your home was built before 1978, use lead-safe work practices for all renovation and repairs and test children in the home for lead exposure
- Check piping connecting your home to the water main and the piping in your home for lead (lead pipes are dull and can be scratched easily with a penny). Lead pipes are more likely to be found in homes built before 1986
- No smoking inside the home, especially with children in the same home
- Have a professional maintain yearly all gas appliances and check for carbon monoxide leaks and proper venting
- Do not use candles or incense in the home when adult supervision is not present
- Secure balcony and stair railings, and install no-slip nosings
- Replace burned-out bulbs in lights over stairs and landings
- Run a dehumidifier if indoor humidity is above 50 percent or you see condensation on windows
- Make sure all gas burning appliances, furnaces, heaters, and fireplaces ventilate to the outside
- Replace the furnace filter with a MERV 8 or better every three months
- If mold is visible in any room, refer to mold removal guidelines from the EPA, CDC, or HUD
- Install child-proof locks on cabinets and child-proof covers on electrical outlets
- Keep water temperature at less than 120 degrees
- Keep firearms in locked safes
- Use pest management recommendations or safer alternative products before applying pesticides
- Keep all cleaning products in original containers and do not mix two products together