

Home Management Binder

Everything They Forgot to Tell You



Before You Begin

Please read this page. It applies to everything that follows.

WHAT THIS IS, AND WHAT IT IS NOT

This is general educational information and a tool for personal organization and reflection.

It is not medical, mental-health, legal, tax, or financial advice, and it does not create any professional relationship.

The content is general and may not fit your circumstances. For decisions about your health, your money, or your legal affairs, consult a qualified professional who knows your situation.

IF YOU ARE IN CRISIS

If you are thinking about harming yourself or someone else, put this down and get help now.

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline — call or text 988. Crisis Text Line — text HOME to 741741. Or go to your nearest emergency room.

NO GUARANTEES

Results depend entirely on your circumstances and effort. No outcome is promised or implied.

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Because this is delivered instantly, sales are final. If you find a genuine defect in your file, contact us and we will replace it.

Nobody hands you the manual. So write it.

Every house runs on facts scattered across receipts, old emails, and the previous owner's memory: the furnace's age, the paint code for the hallway, which plumber actually calls back. This binder collects them once — and the maintenance calendar turns "I should really check that" into four short seasonal checklists.

Fill the vitals pages over a weekend walk-through. Then the binder mostly maintains itself: log work as it happens, check the season's list when it turns.

THREE PARTS

§1	Know your house	System vitals, paint codes, warranties, inventory. p. 3–9
§2	Maintain it	Four seasonal checklists and the cleaning rotation. p. 10–15
§3	Improve it	Contractor registry, project trackers, and the wishlist. p. 16–18

PART ONE

Know your house.

Take this binder on a walk-through with a flashlight. Model numbers, install dates, filter sizes, shutoff locations — twenty minutes of looking saves hours of panicked Googling later.

System vitals.

The big five. Age matters most — it tells you what to budget for before it fails.

FURNACE / HVAC

BRAND + MODEL

INSTALLED / AGE

FILTER SIZE ×

LAST SERVICED

WATER HEATER

BRAND + MODEL

INSTALLED / AGE

GAS / ELECTRIC · CAPACITY

LAST FLUSHED

ROOF

MATERIAL

INSTALLED / AGE

LAST INSPECTED

KNOWN TROUBLE SPOTS

ELECTRICAL & PLUMBING

PANEL AMPS / BREAKER QUIRKS

PIPE MATERIAL (COPPER, PEX, GALVANIZED)

SUMP PUMP? TESTED WHEN

WATER PRESSURE / SOFTENER NOTES

Shutoffs, codes & sizes.

The 2 a.m. page. Walk the house and write exact locations — "behind the water heater, red handle."

SHUTOFFS — EXACT LOCATIONS

WATER MAIN

GAS MAIN

OUTDOOR SPIGOTS WINTER VALVE

BREAKER PANEL + WHICH SWITCH IS WHAT (TAPED INSIDE?)

PAINT CODES — ROOM BY ROOM

LIVING ROOM — BRAND / COLOR / FINISH

KITCHEN

BEDROOMS

TRIM / EXTERIOR

THE SIZES LIST

FURNACE FILTER

FRIDGE WATER FILTER

LIGHT BULBS (ODD ONES)

BATTERIES (SMOKE ALARMS, REMOTES, THERMOSTAT)

When something breaks, the first question is "is it under warranty?" Answer it in ten seconds instead of an evening of email archaeology.

[illegible]

EXTENDED WARRANTIES WORTH TRACKING — AND THE CLAIM NUMBERS

Utilities & services registry.

Every account that keeps the house alive — provider, account number's last four, and how it's paid.

SERVICE	PROVIDER	ACCT (LAST 4)	PAID HOW / DUE DAY
Electric			
Gas			
Water / sewer			
Trash / recycling			
Internet			
Phone / mobile			
Streaming bundle			
Security / alarm			
HOA			
Lawn / snow service			

Room-by-room inventory.

For insurance: the big-ticket contents per room. Photograph each room and note where the photos live — a claim without documentation is a negotiation.

ROOM	BIG-TICKET ITEMS	APPROX. VALUE
Living room		
Kitchen		
Primary bedroom		
Bedroom 2		
Bedroom 3 / office		
Garage / basement		
Outdoor		

PHOTOS / VIDEO OF CONTENTS LIVE AT _____

The quirks page.

Every house has folk knowledge: the breaker that trips when the microwave and toaster run together, the window that needs a shim. Write down what only you know.

THE QUIRKS — TRICKS, WARNINGS, AND WORKAROUNDS, ONE PER LINE

KNOWN PROBLEMS I'M WATCHING (THE CRACK, THE DRIP, THE DRAFT) — WITH DATES SO I CAN TELL IF THEY'RE GROWING

THE ONE THING THE NEXT OWNER WOULD NEED TO KNOW

PART TWO

Maintain it.

Houses fail slowly, then suddenly. The seasonal lists take an afternoon each and catch the slow part while it's still cheap.

Spring checklist.

Post-winter damage check and getting water flowing the right way.

OUTSIDE

- ☐ Gutters & downspouts cleared, water runs away from foundation
- ☐ Roof scan — lifted shingles, flashing, moss
- ☐ Foundation walk — new cracks, peeling paint, rot
- ☐ Outdoor spigots on; check for winter burst
- ☐ AC condenser cleared of debris; service if due
- ☐ Deck / fence — loose boards, reseal check

INSIDE

- ☐ HVAC filter changed; AC test-run before the first hot day
- ☐ Smoke & CO alarm batteries (do it when clocks change)
- ☐ Water heater — check for rust weep at base
- ☐ Windows & screens — repair before bug season
- ☐ Dryer vent duct cleaned (lint fires are real)
- ☐ Sump pump tested — pour a bucket in

DONE THIS YEAR ON (DATE) · WHAT I FOUND

Summer checklist.

The light season — projects, pests, and keeping cooling costs sane.

OUTSIDE

- ☐ Hose bibs & irrigation leak check
- ☐ Trees trimmed off the roof and power lines
- ☐ Pest patrol — nests, ant trails, wood damage
- ☐ Driveway / walkway cracks sealed
- ☐ Exterior paint touch-ups (best weather for it)
- ☐ Grill gas line / propane check

INSIDE

- ☐ HVAC filter changed (monthly in heavy season)
- ☐ Ceiling fans set to counterclockwise
- ☐ Fridge coils vacuumed
- ☐ Bathroom fans — clean grilles, test flow
- ☐ Garbage disposal — ice + citrus refresh
- ☐ Deep-clean one neglected zone (pick it now)

DONE THIS YEAR ON (DATE) · WHAT I FOUND

Fall checklist.

Winterizing. The highest-stakes list — freeze damage is the expensive kind.

OUTSIDE

- ☐ Gutters cleared after leaf drop
- ☐ Outdoor spigots off & drained; hoses stored
- ☐ Irrigation blown out
- ☐ Roof & chimney check before snow
- ☐ Walkway lighting & railings solid before ice
- ☐ Snow gear staged — shovels, salt, blower serviced

INSIDE

- ☐ Furnace serviced; filter changed; test before first cold night
- ☐ Chimney swept if wood-burning
- ☐ Weatherstripping — doors & windows, feel for drafts
- ☐ Ceiling fans reversed to clockwise
- ☐ Smoke & CO alarms again (clocks change)
- ☐ Pipes on exterior walls — insulate the vulnerable ones

DONE THIS YEAR ON (DATE) · WHAT I FOUND

Winter checklist.

Mostly watching — ice, moisture, and the systems working hardest.

OUTSIDE

- ☐ Ice dams — watch eaves after storms
- ☐ Snow cleared off gas meter & dryer vent
- ☐ Foundation vents closed / crawlspace check
- ☐ Salt supply topped up before the storm, not during

INSIDE

- ☐ HVAC filter monthly while the furnace runs hard
- ☐ Humidity check — condensation on windows means too high
- ☐ Water heater temp 120°F; consider a blanket
- ☐ Under-sink cabinets open on hard-freeze nights
- ☐ Test main water shutoff (you'll want muscle memory)
- ☐ Plan next year's projects — quote season is coming

DONE THIS YEAR ON (DATE) · WHAT I FOUND

The cleaning rotation.

Daily keeps the house livable, weekly keeps it clean, monthly keeps it from decaying. Assign names; unowned chores don't happen.

DAILY — 15 MIN

- ☐ Dishes done, sink empty
- ☐ Counters wiped
- ☐ One 10-min pickup sweep
- ☐ Mail triaged, not piled

OWNER _____

WEEKLY

- ☐ Bathrooms
- ☐ Floors — vacuum / mop
- ☐ Sheets & towels
- ☐ Fridge purge before shopping
- ☐ Trash & recycling out

OWNER _____

MONTHLY

- ☐ One deep-clean zone (rotate)
- ☐ Microwave / oven / vents
- ☐ Baseboards & door handles
- ☐ Wash trash cans
- ☐ HVAC filter check

OWNER _____

THE ZONE ROTATION — WHICH ROOM GETS THE MONTHLY DEEP CLEAN, IN ORDER _____

PART THREE

Improve it.

Every project goes better with a paper trail: who you hired, what they quoted, what it actually cost, and whether you'd call them again.

The contractor registry.

A plumber who calls back is worth protecting. Log everyone — including the ones you'd never rehire, so you don't.

TRADE / NAME	PHONE	USED FOR / WHEN	REHIRE?
Plumber			
Electrician			
HVAC			
Handyman			
Roofer			
Painter			
Landscaper			
Appliance repair			

RECOMMENDED BY NEIGHBORS, NOT YET USED

Project trackers & the wishlist.

Three live projects, tracked from quote to done — and the someday list with honest guesses, so windfalls have a plan waiting.

Project 1 _____ STATUS: PLANNED / QUOTED / UNDERWAY / DONE

BUDGET _____ QUOTES — WHO / HOW MUCH _____

ACTUAL COST _____ DONE ON / WARRANTY ON THE WORK _____

WHAT I'D DO DIFFERENTLY _____

Project 2 _____ STATUS: PLANNED / QUOTED / UNDERWAY / DONE

BUDGET _____ QUOTES — WHO / HOW MUCH _____

ACTUAL COST _____ DONE ON / WARRANTY ON THE WORK _____

WHAT I'D DO DIFFERENTLY _____

Project 3 _____ STATUS: PLANNED / QUOTED / UNDERWAY / DONE

BUDGET _____ QUOTES — WHO / HOW MUCH _____

ACTUAL COST _____ DONE ON / WARRANTY ON THE WORK _____

WHAT I'D DO DIFFERENTLY _____

THE WISHLIST — SOMEDAY, WITH A GUESSED PRICE TAG

_____	_____
_____	_____

THE ADULTING VAULT

**Houses don't come with manuals.
Yours does now.**



HOME MANAGEMENT BINDER

EVERYTHING THEY FORGOT TO TELL YOU