

HOME



Tips and trends for homeowners, buyers and sellers

Making Your Home Pet-Friendly



Have you been thinking about adding a new furry, feathered or scaled friend to your household? Well before you make your way to the pet store, consider how you'll be able to make sure your home is as comfortable and safe as possible for your new companion.

Choose a space that will be dedicated to your pet — If you give your pet an ample amount of dedicated space of your home, they'll be less likely to sneak into the small, dangerous places where you don't want them wandering. If your pet is one that likes to wander beyond their allotted area, consider purchasing gates to create physical boundaries.



Purchase trash cans with lids — For pets that will grow tall enough or can jump high enough to access your trash cans, it will be well worth investing in cans that have a lid. Even better is a stainless-steel trash can with a lid that has a sensor and can only be opened by a hand motion.

Hard vs. soft flooring — There are pros and cons to the type of flooring you have for your pets. Hard surfaces like tile and hardwood are easier to clean, however softer surfaces like carpets and rugs may be easier for your pet to walk on. This will come down to your personal and pet's preferences.



Get a quality vacuum cleaner — If you want to have carpets or rugs in your home, opt for materials that will sustain the least amount of damage. If you have a pet that sheds fur, you'll want to acquire a quality vacuum cleaner. There are some vacuum cleaners that are made specifically for pet hair to avoid potential jams and damage to the appliance.

Furnace Maintenance

Replacing a furnace is a large expense that you can easily avoid by taking the proper steps to maintain the one you have year to year. Furnace maintenance doesn't cost much, won't take too much time and will allow your home to be warmed more efficiently. Here's how you can best maintain your furnace this winter.

1. Examine the tubes and pipes — Take a good look at the venting pipe, tubes, fasteners and gas line. If you smell rotten eggs, there's likely a gas leak.

2. Vacuum and dust — The accumulation of dust and dirt will cause your furnace to function suboptimally. Use a small brush to dust off the smaller components of the furnace.

3. Clean the flame sensor — You should clean your flame sensor once a year, as a dirty one can prevent the furnace from functioning all together.



4. Replace the filter — It's critical for the longevity of your furnace that you change the filter often. Replacing the filter regularly can even save you a considerable amount on your energy bills. It's recommended that 1- to 2-inch filters be replaced every one to three months, every six to nine months for 3- to 4-inch filters and every 9 to 12 months for 5- to 6-inch filters.

5. Seal any air ducts that are leaking — Using a special metal tape or high-temperature silicone, seal any leaky ducts, especially return air ducts.



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