

# KEEPING YOUR HOME IN GOOD CONDITION



Whether you are renting an apartment or bought a place of your own, where you live is more than a roof and four walls. It is home, for you and for your family.

To help you make sure your family is as comfortable as possible, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) offers the following tips on how to keep your home in good condition:

- If you have an air conditioner, use it only when necessary, and close the windows when it is on. Otherwise, you are just paying to cool the outdoors.
- Always turn on the fan in the bathroom when you are taking a bath or shower, and turn on the stove exhaust fan in the kitchen whenever you are cooking. This will help remove unwanted moisture and keep smells to a minimum.
- Never hang wet laundry to dry inside your home, unless you open a window nearby. If you find the air inside your home is dry in the winter, you can use a humidifier or put out an open bowl of water. In the summer, if you live in a basement apartment, you may need to use a dehumidifier to remove moisture from the air.
- Don't use a fireplace unless you know how to operate it. If you aren't sure how the fireplace works, ask your landlord or superintendent to show you how to use it.
- Don't give copies of your keys to anyone who doesn't live with you. If you give keys to a friend to look after your place when you are away, make sure to get them back after you come home.
- Always use a shower curtain, unless your shower has a glass enclosure. Shower curtains hang inside the bathtub, to stop water from getting on the floor.
- Make sure your apartment has at least one smoke detector, and be sure to replace the batteries before they run out. Most smoke detectors will make a beeping sound to let you know when the batteries need to be changed.
- Never leave open food or garbage sitting out, because this can attract insects, mice and other pests. Also, get rid of any clutter you don't really need, and clean your home well on a regular basis.
- If you have a space heater, ask your landlord or superintendent to show you how to use it. Space heaters use a lot of electricity, so they can be expensive to operate. Space heaters can also be dangerous, especially if you have small children.

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- If your stove has a timer, make sure you set it correctly. If you set the wrong time, it will turn the stove on when you don't want it to. This could damage the stove or even start a fire if the stove turns on when you are not home.
  - If your apartment is too hot in the winter, instead of opening the windows, try turning down the thermostat. A thermostat is a small dial or panel that lets you control the temperature inside your home. Turning down the thermostat can help you save energy and money. If you don't have a thermostat in your apartment, ask the superintendent to change the temperature for you.

Remember: your landlord is responsible for keeping your building safe and livable. This includes repairing and maintaining the heating, plumbing, electricity, locks, walls, floors, ceilings, fire doors, fire escapes, intercoms and elevators. Your landlord is also responsible for anything that comes with your apartment and which is included in your rent, such as the fridge and stove, laundry facilities, storage sheds and garages.

But by doing your part to help keep your apartment in good condition, you can help keep your home safe, comfortable and secure for as long as you choose to live there.

For more housing information, please visit Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation at [www.cmhc.ca/newcomers](http://www.cmhc.ca/newcomers).