

Toilet Maintenance

A ten minute monthly check that catches leaks early, prevents clogs, and tells you when it is time to call a plumber.

1 Clean and Disinfect

- ☐ Wipe down the entire bowl and exterior with disinfectant cleaner.
- ☐ Scrub the bowl thoroughly with a toilet brush.
- ☐ Clean under the rim and around the base of the toilet.

2 Check for Leaks

- ☐ **Visual inspection.** Look for any water on the floor around the base.
- ☐ **Dye test.** Add a few drops of food coloring to the tank. Wait 30 minutes. If color shows in the bowl, you have a leak.

3 Inspect the Flapper

- ☐ Confirm the flapper seals so the toilet does not run constantly.
- ☐ Look for wear, warping, or damage on the rubber seal.

4 Check Flush and Water Level

- ☐ Flush and watch how quickly the water drains.
- ☐ A slow or high rise can mean a partial clog in the trap or line.
- ☐ Confirm the tank water sits at the fill line marked inside.

5 Prevent Problems

- ☐ Flush only toilet paper and human waste.
- ☐ Keep a plunger nearby and clear minor clogs early.

IMPORTANT NOTES

Frequency. Run this checklist monthly or as needed.

Safety first. Wear gloves and eye protection when using cleaning chemicals.

Professional help. If you suspect a serious issue or are unsure, call a licensed plumber.



Emergency Preparedness

Know your shut-offs and keep the right tools on hand so a burst pipe or sudden leak stays a small problem, not a flood.

1 Know Your Shut-Off Valves

- ☐ Locate the main water shut-off valve for the entire house.
- ☐ Find individual shut-offs for toilets, sinks, the washing machine, dishwasher, and water heater.

2 Tools and Supplies

- ☐ Basic plumbing toolkit: pipe wrench, basin wrench, pliers, screwdrivers.
- ☐ A cup plunger for sinks and a flange plunger for toilets.
- ☐ Hand auger or small drain snake.
- ☐ Buckets and towels for catching leaks.
- ☐ Plumber's tape.
- ☐ Temporary pipe repair clamps or tape.

3 Contacts and Practice

- ☐ Keep the number of a trusted plumber readily available.
- ☐ Make sure everyone in the home knows where the main shut-off is and how to operate it.

IMPORTANT NOTES

Safety first. Wear appropriate safety gear such as gloves and a mask when needed.

Professional help. For any major plumbing issue or concern, call a licensed plumber. James Armstrong Plumbing answers at 214-918-6109.



Preparing for Winter

North Texas freezes are short but sharp. A few steps before the first hard freeze protect your pipes from bursting.

1 Outside the Home

- ☐ Drain and shut off exterior faucets and spigots.
- ☐ Disconnect and store garden hoses.
- ☐ Seal any cracks or openings near pipes on exterior walls.

2 Inside and Unheated Areas

- ☐ Insulate exposed pipes in crawl spaces, attics, and garages.
- ☐ Know the location of your main water shut-off valve and confirm it works.

3 If the Home Will Be Empty

- ☐ For an extended vacancy, drain the system or keep the heat on at a low temperature.

IMPORTANT NOTES

Why it matters. A pipe that freezes can crack and flood a home when it thaws. Prevention costs minutes.

Professional help. For pipe insulation questions or a freeze that already happened, call a licensed plumber.

Tankless Water Heater

A yearly inspection keeps a tankless unit running efficiently.
Turn off power or gas before you start any of these checks.

1 Visual Inspection

- ☐ **Leaks.** Check around the unit, pipes, and connections for water.
- ☐ **Corrosion.** Inspect for rust, pitting, or other corrosion.
- ☐ **Damage.** Look for dents, cracks, or physical damage.

2 Safety Checks

- ☐ **Gas lines.** For gas units, check for a gas odor or hissing and confirm ventilation.
- ☐ **Electrical.** For electric units, check for loose wires or damaged insulation.
- ☐ **T&P valve.** Lift the relief valve lever slightly to release a little water, then check for leaks.

3 Operational Checks

- ☐ **Water flow.** Check hot water flow at several fixtures at once.
- ☐ **Temperature.** Confirm consistent hot water at the set temperature.
- ☐ **Error codes.** Check the control panel for any error codes.

4 Maintenance

- ☐ **Water filters.** Clean or replace per the manufacturer, often every 6 to 12 months.
- ☐ **Air filters.** For gas units, clean or replace as the manufacturer directs.
- ☐ **Descaling.** Remove mineral buildup on the maker's schedule using their method.

IMPORTANT NOTES

Safety first. Turn off the power or gas supply to the unit before any inspection or maintenance.

Professional help. For descaling, major concerns, or anything you are unsure of, call a plumber certified on tankless units.