



# Hints For The Home

## Six Steps To A Well-Maintained Home

(NAPSA)—Your home is, most likely, your biggest investment. Here, from an assortment of experts, are a few hints on how to keep it in good shape:

1. **Good Clean Fun:** When it comes to cleaning ceramic floors, there's no need to wax. Just sweep and mop on a regular basis and they stay clean and shiny. Mop floors with clear water or just a dash of liquid dish soap. Be sure to change the water when it gets cloudy. Too much soap or dirty water will make floors dull or sticky. Don't use scrub pads on ceramic tile floors or you might scratch them. Professional cleaners wash most floors by hand, cleaning and drying a small area at a time. That's the advice from Merry Maids comprehensive cleaning service, which can scale a plan—weekly, biweekly or monthly—to meet your needs and your budget.

2. **Floor Facts:** To maintain your carpets' appearance, they should be professionally cleaned every six to 12 months. If, however, you've suffered damage from water, fire or smoke, they need help right away. The ServiceMaster Clean residential services division specialists in carpet and upholstery cleaning can help either way. In an emergency, their yellow trucks can be dispatched 24/7, 365 days a year to restore your home to pre-disaster condition.

3. **When Your Yard Wants to Be a Lawn:** Great lawns require great soil with the right balance of alkaline and acid. If your soil is out of balance, you can adjust the pH with lime, potassium or other micronutrients. To help your lawn grow great, a leading provider of lawn and landscape services, TruGreen, delivers customized solu-



**Your house can be less expensive to maintain, more comfortable to live in and easier to sell when the time comes if you take a few simple steps with help from home maintenance experts.**

tions that are effective, innovative and responsible.

4. **Best the Pests:** Household pests are more than an embarrassing nuisance. They can carry harmful Terminix into your home. To protect your home, keep the firewood pile away from the house. Seal any cracks around windows and doors and be sure all screens are in good repair. A quarterly pest control plan from Terminix can help eradicate any pests. The program is managed by certified professionals who can also recommend modifications to prevent new infestations.

5. **Deter Termites:** You can also make your house less attractive to termites. Since the pests need moisture to survive, grade the soil around your foundation so it carries water away from the house. Keep gutters and downspouts in good repair. Consider a

Termite Inspection and Protection Plan from Terminix. You get an annual inspection of home and property. If new termite activity is later found, the damage will be covered at no cost to you.

6. **Protect Your Appliances:** For example, it's a cool idea to clean the refrigerator's interior shelves, shell and gaskets at least every three months. Once a year, clean the coils on the back or underneath with a vacuum cleaner. You can get a home warranty from American Home Shield that can be one of the best defenses against extensive and unexpected covered repair costs, with a national contractor network made up of over 11,000 approved, independently insured home-service contractors.

### More Information

You can learn more at [www.servicemaster.com](http://www.servicemaster.com) and (866) 348-7672.