

Dear Friend,

Each month, BOWA Home Advisor provides you with important tips on how to improve and protect your home's value. We hope the following is helpful.



Custom Renovation
Washington, DC

Are your appliances getting enough care?

When you purchase your kitchen appliances you make an investment that you expect will last for years. However, just like with your automobile, you need to adopt a regular schedule of maintenance to get the most out of your appliances.

Following are a few tips to help keep them running in top condition.

Refrigerators/Freezers

- On self-defrosting refrigerator/freezers, the drain pan collects water. Usually located underneath the unit, the drain pan should be cleaned annually.
- Also once per year, slide the refrigerator out and vacuum around and beneath it to remove dust and dirt. If left unattended, this dirt will collect on the coils.
- Twice each year, clean the coils with a vacuum or condenser coil brush, available at an appliance dealer. The coils are usually behind the grill at the top- or bottom-front of the unit. Be sure to avoid disturbing the insulation or bending the fan blades in the process.
- As a leaky gasket wastes energy and shortens the life of the compressor, inspect the door gasket for damage or excessive wear twice each year. Replace the gasket as needed. Regularly cleaning the door gasket with a solution of baking soda dissolved in warm water, will help to keep it soft and pliable.
- Every six months, change the inline water filter on the ice maker.
- Check the light bulbs and replace if needed.
- Tighten and adjust the handles and other hardware as needed.

Dishwashers

- At least twice per year, run the dishwasher while

observing it to identify any minor leaks. Also remove the lower panel and check for leaks in the supply and drain hoses. Tighten clamps or replace hoses as needed.

- Remove the spray arm and clean it thoroughly. Poke a piece of stiff wire or a toothpick through the holes in the spray arm to release debris and scrub any mineral deposits off with hot distilled white vinegar. Do this twice each year.
- Most dishwashers have a filter, located near the bottom or under the lower spray arm, that needs cleaning regularly. Consult your owner's manual for how to remove and clean the filter. If the filter is damaged, replace it to protect the dishwasher's pump and motor seals.
- Repair broken and rusted dishwasher racks. If the plastic coating wears off, the tines may corrode and rust. Any rust particles can get into the pump and cause serious problems.
- Before starting a regular wash cycle, place a small container filled with one cup of distilled white vinegar on each rack. The dishwasher will disperse the vinegar during the wash cycle to dissolve mineral accumulation and soap residue. Do this a few times each year.

Oven and Cook Tops

- Inspect the oven-door gasket annually. It should be soft and pliable. If it is too hard, it may allow heat to escape and affect the performance of the oven. Replace the gasket as needed.
- Following your manufacturer's instructions, run the oven's self-cleaning cycle. Clean around the door and its gasket first as these areas often don't receive enough heat to thoroughly burn off grease and splatters.
- Regularly wipe down the range top. A clean surface prevents scratches and stops acidic food from eating away at the appliance finish.
- Replace the oven light as needed.

Range Vent Hood

- Once each year, clean the fan blades to remove dirt and grease, which can restrict air flow. Once clean, you may need to oil the fan motor for smooth operation.
- Twice per year, remove and clean the metal filter. Using warm, soapy water let the filter soak for a few minutes, then wash and rinse. Once dry, replace the filter.
- However, if you have charcoal filters they cannot be cleaned and should be replaced once per year.
- As range hoods and fans remove grease and moisture from cooking, the surface needs to be cleaned regularly to avoid build up. Use warm, soapy water or a mix of ammonia and water if very greasy. Then, rinse and wipe dry.

Garbage Disposals

- To clean the disposal, dump ice from the freezer into the disposal and run it as needed.
- Twice per year, inspect under the sink for leaks, loose hoses and electrical connections. Repair as necessary.

While these tips are recommended as a guideline, be sure to consult your owner's manuals for any details specific to your appliances. With a little bit of extra care, your kitchen appliances are sure to serve you well for years to come.

Some excerpts were taken from Dulley's Update Bulletin.

For your convenience, past issues of the *BOWA Home Advisor*, are available in the 'About Us' section of our [web site](#).

If you would like more information on any of these topics or if there are other ways we can be of service, please contact [BOWA Builders](#).

Regards.



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