



Top 10 Maintenance Tips For Vacation Rentals

Whether you manage 1 vacation rental or 100, keeping a property in tiptop shape takes work. It's easy to get overwhelmed with too much to do, so here's a list of the top 10 areas for maintenance that deserve most of your time.

Cleaning

1. De-clutter. If there's sports equipment that's never used, gardening tools stored where guests can see them, or any other kind of clutter in your rental, clean it up now. If there are items you just can't toss or must stay in the house, then either store them in a locked closet or outdoor shed.



2. White glove test. Do not assume your guests won't notice the dust on top of the kitchen cabinets. A vacation rental can never be too clean. Do a deep clean--scrub out every corner, clean up any stains, polish surfaces to a blindingly bright finish. You're competing against hotels and resorts that have full time cleaning staffs, so wipe down the blinds, disinfect the counter tops and floors, and polish the fixtures to a brilliant shine.

Perhaps most importantly, make sure your windows are spotless. Not only will you let more light in, clean windows give a great first impression since the first thing vacationers do is head for the windows to check out the view. It sounds like a lot of work, but it really isn't. Keeping an already clean rental spotless is relatively easy. And the last thing you want is a review that says, "the place was dirty."

Bath

3. Shower Doors & Fixtures. Keep the things your guests use most in tip-top shape. Not only will they be happier guests, you'll ward off any major problems with ongoing maintenance. Shower doors should be thoroughly cleaned regularly and replaced if they don't function right. Dripping or leaky faucets need to be fixed or replaced as soon as possible. If you've got loose towel racks, paper holders or toilet seats, tighten them up. In fact, these are the kinds of things you should check regularly.

4. Grout. Keep it clean with oxygen bleach (this also applies to any other grouted tile you have in your rental). Oxygen bleach is an environmentally safe cleaner—it works best if you let it sit. It works on all kinds of grout, whether it's floor tile, in a shower, or on a countertop. Unlike chlorine bleach, it won't change the color of your tiles. Regular cleaning will make the job go faster.

Kitchen



5. Stove, refrigerator and microwave. Not only should they be spotlessly clean, they should also be in perfect working condition. If a light bulb's burned out, replace it. Any loose doors or handles should be tightened down. Timers should work and clocks should be set.

6. Countertops and sinks
These areas, along with the refrigerator, are most closely

associated with sanitary food handling. Make sure they're not just clean, but in perfect working condition. Repair, scrub and repeat as needed. Don't hesitate to replace faucets. They're relatively inexpensive.

Interior

7. Painting. This is probably the easiest fix up of all. Take a good look at the paint on the interior of your rental. Is it out of date, chipped or faded? If a room has not been repainted in several years, it's probably time. Like cleaning, if you stay on top of this, it won't take too much time or cause much disruption. Yet it will make a big difference on how new, fresh and inviting your rental appears to guests. Try to paint in neutral, timeless colors to start with. Then, when you freshen with a new coat, the job will be much quicker and less expensive.

Outdoors & Landscaping



8. First impressions. Repair cracks in your front walk, make sure all paving stones are secure, add a border of flowers or shrubs and, last but not least, make sure your front door is in good working order and looks fantastic.

9. Landscaping clean up. Trim hedges and pull weeds regularly, Twice a year, do a full clean up of all your landscaping, replacing old, tired

looking mulch, prune trees, and clean up old garden plants.

10. Outdoor entertainment areas. Your guests will be spending a lot of time in your hot tub and pool, on your deck, or using your gas grill. First, keep them as clean as you would a kitchen or bath. Since people are on vacation looking to relax, they'll get about as much use and garner perhaps even more critical attention than a kitchen or bath. Be sure everything's in good working order. If there's a small tear in the hot tub cover, repair it. Pool ladders and ropes should be battened down. And make sure lifesaving devices are present and in perfect working condition.