

THE COMPLETE HANDBOOK FOR

Household Appliance Care & Maintenance



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ABSTRACT

The Complete Handbook for Household Appliance Care and Maintenance" is a comprehensive guide designed to help homeowners ensure the longevity and optimal performance of their household appliances. This handbook provides practical advice and detailed instructions on the upkeep of various appliances commonly found in the home, including kitchen, laundry, and HVAC systems. It begins with a general overview of appliance maintenance, emphasizing the importance of routine cleaning, regular inspections, and proactive troubleshooting to prevent common issues and extend the lifespan of devices.



The guide is divided into clear sections, each focusing on specific types of appliances. For kitchen appliances, it offers tips on maintaining refrigerators, ovens, stoves, dishwashers, and microwaves, addressing tasks such as cleaning filters, checking seals, and ensuring proper functionality. Similarly, the handbook covers laundry appliances, detailing methods for cleaning washing machines and dryers, as well as inspecting hoses and belts. HVAC system maintenance is also thoroughly explored, with advice on cleaning air conditioners and heaters, inspecting filters, and checking refrigerant levels.

LET'S GET STARTED

The Complete Handbook for Household Appliance Care and Maintenance" is an all-encompassing resource crafted to guide homeowners in preserving the functionality and extending the lifespan of their household appliances. This practical guide spans a wide range of topics, starting with foundational maintenance practices applicable to all devices. It emphasizes the importance of regular cleaning, timely inspections, and proactive troubleshooting to prevent issues and ensure appliances perform optimally.

The handbook is systematically organized into sections, each dedicated to different categories of appliances. In the kitchen appliance segment, it covers essential maintenance tasks for refrigerators, ovens, stoves, dishwashers, and microwaves, providing detailed instructions on cleaning techniques, filter replacement, and seal checks. For laundry appliances, the guide addresses the cleaning of washing machines and dryers, the importance of inspecting hoses and belts, and tips for ensuring efficient operation. The HVAC section offers comprehensive advice on maintaining air conditioning units and heaters, including filter cleaning, refrigerant checks, and general upkeep to enhance performance and energy efficiency.



Additionally, the handbook includes guidance on caring for small appliances such as vacuum cleaners and coffee makers, alongside crucial electrical safety tips to handle and maintain electrical components safely. Seasonal maintenance advice prepares homeowners for varying weather conditions, while information on when to seek professional help ensures that complex issues are managed effectively.

The guide concludes with strategies for extending the lifespan of appliances through proper usage and timely upgrades. With detailed appendices featuring maintenance schedules, checklists, and a glossary of terms, this handbook serves as a valuable tool for homeowners seeking to keep their appliances in peak condition, thereby ensuring their home operates smoothly and efficiently year-round.

SOME ESSENTIAL HOUSEWARES & APPLIANCES

Whether you're setting up a home for the first time or you're replacing lost items, this checklist of house essentials can help ensure you're covered for the basics. It can also come in handy when you need ideas for wedding, anniversary, and shower gifts.

Major Appliances

Some major appliances may already be in place in your home, especially if you're renting. New homes usually have no appliances other than heating/cooling equipment and a hot water heater.

- Refrigerator with freezer
- Range or cooktop and oven
- Microwave oven
- Freezer, chest or upright (optional)
- Dishwasher (optional)
- Clothes washer and dryer

Countertop Appliances & Accessories

Most countertop appliances have "manual," or non-electric counterparts. For example, you can opt for a stovetop coffee maker instead of a standard plug-in drip coffee machine.

- Toaster or toaster oven
- Mixer (handheld or stand)
- Blender (standard or stick)
- Coffeemaker
- Electric kettle



Cooking Implements

Active home cooks tend to acquire specific and specialty cooking tools over time, based on the type of cooking they do. But a basic set of implements will suffice for most recipes and dishes.

- 6-, 8-, and 12-inch frying pans
- 1-, 2-, and 4-quart saucepans with lids
- Dutch oven or large pot with lid
- Stockpot (optional)
- Steamer pot or steamer basket
- Casserole dish

- Roasting Pan

Bakeware

Baking tends to be more precise than everyday cooking, so it helps to have the most standard tools, such as a classic 9-inch pie pan, to follow baking recipes without having to make modifications.

- Heavy baking sheets
- Cookie sheets
- 9-inch pie pan
- Rectangular bakers or baking dishes
- Rolling pin
- Metal cooling racks
- Ramekins or custard cups

Kitchen Utensils & Tools

A well-equipped kitchen feels more like a home kitchen and less like a rental property. Think about the items you most often reach for as well as some cook's favorites that you may not have tried, like a spider strainer.

- Large- and medium-size mixing bowls
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Canister set (for storing grains, flour, and other dry staples)
- Kitchen tool holder
- Spice rack or holder
- Colander or set of strainers
- Silicone spatulas
- Metal spatula or flipper
- Wooden spoons
- Spider skimmer
- Can opener
- Wisk
- Kitchen scissors
- Cheese and vegetable grater

- Plastic and/or metal serving and cooking utensils, such as large slotted and regular spoons, soup ladle, potato masher, large meat fork, and stirring paddles
- Knife set, including paring, chef, and serrated knives
- Steak knives
- Cutting boards
- Vegetable cleaning brush
- Potholders, hot pads, and oven mitts
- Dishcloths and tea towels
- Trivets



Tableware & Serving

Dishes and silverware go quickly whether you're cooking a family meal or hosting a dinner party. It's best to have extra settings for the most common items.

- Flatware settings (dinner fork, salad fork, teaspoon, soup spoon, knife) for eight to 12 people
- Everyday dish setting (dinner plate, salad plate, soup bowl) for six, or as needed
- Fruit or dessert dishes

- Glassware assortment, including 4-, 6-, and 8-ounce glasses
- Small bowls, such as cereal bowls, if not included in dish set
- Coffee mugs and teacups
- Salt and pepper set
- Cream and sugar bowl
- Napkin holder
- Set of serving bowls
- Teapot (if you don't have an electric kettle)
- Serving platter

Floor Care & Cleaning Items

There are an endless array cleaning supplies you can buy, but a basic collection will get you through most everyday chores. Even professional house cleaners rely on relatively few supplies.

- Vacuum cleaner
- Broom and dustpan
- Floor mop, scrub pail, scrub brush, and cleaning rags
- Long bottlebrush
- Scouring or pot cleaning pads, or brushes
- Dust Rag
- Microfiber cleaning cloths (optional)



Linens & Towels

As with dishes, having more sets of towels and bed linens means you won't have to wash items in a hurry because you've run out. It's also nice to have plenty of good linens for house guests.

- Bath towels
- Hand towels
- Washcloths
- Bed sheets
- Blankets and bed covers
- Pillows and pillow covers (include extra for guests)
- Tablecloths
- Cloth napkins
- Placemats

HOW TO CLEAN & TAKE CARE OF HOUSEHOLD APPLIANCES?

Investing in household appliances is one of the best things to do. However, just spending a lot of money on them is not good enough. You need to take care of them to ensure the appliances last longer. These machines work so hard for you, so they are worth taking care of. Over time, they collect dust and do not work properly, especially if you fail to complete certain maintenance tasks. So, it is ideal to adopt a proactive approach to this. Regularly cleaning and taking care of your household appliances will help you prevent common problems and extend their lifespan. While it is true that a thorough professional vacate cleaning Perth is required when you are near the end of your tenancy, regular cleaning also holds supreme importance. Here is how to clean and take care of household appliances. Employ these steps to ensure your appliances function optimally at all times.

1. Clean the Refrigerator Frequently

A consistent refrigerator cleaning routine is highly important to ensure there are no unpleasant odours, bacterial growth, or food contamination. Cleaning the refrigerator's interior on a monthly basis is considered the ideal frequency. Start by taking out all the food items, drawers, and shelves. Next, prepare a cleaning

solution using a mixture of mild detergent and warm water. Generously apply it using a sponge or microfibre cloth to the interior, focusing majorly on stains and spills. Next, use a dry cloth to wipe it. Let the refrigerator interior dry entirely before placing drawers, shelves, and food items back in their places. Finish by wiping the exterior surface with a different clean cloth or sponge moistened with the DIY cleaner. For maintenance, frequently wipe and spot-clean the surfaces. Promptly tackle stains and spills to prevent them from becoming stubborn.

2. Take Care of the Dishwasher

Begin the dishwasher cleaning process by taking out the bottom rack to access the filter. Look for any visible food debris or particles that might have gathered. Thoroughly clean the filter using an old toothbrush or a soft brush, followed by a rinse with hot water. Use a damp cloth to wipe the door seals. It will eliminate any remnants or mould that may obstruct the sealing function. Moreover, expert vacate cleaners Perth recommend running a dishwasher cycle using a combination of baking soda and vinegar. This way, it will be easier for you to get rid of grease and unpleasant odours to ensure your dishwasher performs well.



3. Prioritise Stove Maintenance

According to budget vacate cleaners Perth, maintaining your stoves is important for safety, hygiene and cleanliness. After every use, once the stove's surface has cooled down, apply the cleaning solution made using equal parts of white vinegar and baking soda. Let it sit there for 15-20 minutes. Next, scrub the surface using a non-abrasive sponge. Focus primarily on tough spots, applying a little more cleaning solution if required. The abrasive properties of baking soda will make it easier to lift off the grime without causing any damage. Once you are done with scrubbing, moisten a clean cloth with water. Use it to thoroughly wipe down the stovetop and eliminate the remnants of the cleaning solution. Lastly, dry the stove using a dry cloth to minimise the chances of water spots or streaks.

4. Ensure the Oven is Maintained

A clean oven is important for hygiene and functionality. Start by removing the racks and keep them in warm, soapy water. To clean the interior:

- Prepare a cleaning solution by mixing water and baking soda.
- Generously apply it to the oven's interior while making sure you avoid the sensitive areas.
- Let the cleaner sit there overnight so that it can loosen the grime and grease.
- The next day, use a sponge or damp cloth to wipe the cleaner.
- You can use a vinegar spray to wipe off the remnants.

5. Washing Machine Care

It is important to take proper care of your washing machine to avoid the buildup of mould and residue. Use vinegar, baking soda, and hot water to run a cleaning cycle. To prepare the mixture, combine one cup of baking soda and vinegar. Pour the mixture into the detergent compartment. When running the machine, ensure it is at its hottest and longest cycle to remove unpleasant odours and residues. Next, remember to wipe the door seals and detergent compartments. Keep the door open between washes to permit proper air circulation and minimise the chances of mildew growth. This procedure is often used for expert vacate cleaning Perth.



6. Clean the Microwave Regularly

Make sure you clean the microwave regularly to stop the spills and splatters from hardening and becoming tougher to eliminate. Take a microwave-safe bowl that contains lemon slices as well as water and place it inside the microwave. Let it heat for a brief period to loosen the hard stains. Next, use a moist cloth to wipe the interior. Alternatively, you can prepare another homemade cleaning solution that consists of equal parts vinegar and water in a microwave-safe bowl. Heat it for about 2-3 minutes. Allow it to sit inside the microwave to steam. Carefully remove the bowl because it will be hot. Finish by wiping the interior using a cloth to get rid of stains and grime.

Wrapping Up

Cleaning and maintaining household appliances is important as they are used frequently. It will help them operate optimally and extend their lifespan. Adhere to the methods mentioned in this article to ensure each appliance is in proper working condition.

CLEANING STAINLESS STEEL APPLIANCES, SINKS AND MORE OF KITCHEN

Stainless steel appliances are the shining star of your kitchen—until baked-on grease and fingerprints threaten to steal its thunder. The good news is that it doesn't take much to keep your stove, sink, refrigerator and even cookware clean and sparkling.



When to Clean Stainless Steel Sinks, Appliances and More

Despite its name, stainless steel does get dirty and deserves to be cleaned and maintained on a regular basis.

Ideally, you should clean stainless steel cookware and stove tops soon after use to avoid having to scrub off residue later and potentially damaging the finish. The exterior of appliances, like your refrigerator and microwave, can be wiped down frequently to avoid fingerprints lingering. You should also dry a stainless steel sink with a cloth whenever possible to avoid the water spotting the surface as it dries.

Safety Considerations

Never use any abrasive cleansers or sponges on stainless steel. When in doubt about what's safe to use, consult the owner's manual for the manufacturer's guidelines. Also, do not attempt to clean very hot appliances or cookware to avoid burning yourself.

Instructions on How to Clean Stainless Steel Sinks and Appliances

Cleaning stainless steel doesn't have to be a major chore. Here are some tips to make maintaining your appliances and cookware easier:

Go With the Grain

It's not as obvious to see as it is with wood, but stainless steel does have a grain. Take a close look at the direction it runs in, then clean in a parallel motion to the grain. Otherwise, you'll risk scratching your stainless steel if you clean it against the grain.

Allow Hot Cookware to Cool Down First

Never place a pot straight from the oven or stovetop into a sink—let it cool first on the stovetop or on a trivet on your counter. And don't try to speed things along by running cold water over anything—your stainless steel cookware could warp.

For a stainless steel stove, however, says Anna Vocino, bestselling cookbook author and founder of Eat Happy Kitchen, cleaning it soon after you use it so that drips and spills don't have a chance to dry. Otherwise, you can run the risk of damaging the finish if you attempt to scrub the hardened residue off later. However, be smart—don't attempt to clean a scorching hot stove either. Leave it to cool for a bit and always check the temperature before you begin your cleaning.

Always Wipe Dry With a Clean Cloth

Don't leave freshly cleaned stainless steel to air dry because the water droplets could leave unsightly spots, effectively ruining your efforts to restore its appearance. It might seem counterintuitive to dry your stainless steel sink, but if you want to see it shine, it's worth the extra step.

IMPORTANCE OF REGULAR MAINTENANCE OF YOUR HOME APPLIANCES

Regular maintenance of home appliances is crucial for ensuring their optimal performance, longevity, and safety. Appliances are integral to daily life, from refrigerators and ovens to washing machines and air conditioners. Here's why consistent upkeep is essential:



1. **Enhanced Efficiency:** Regular maintenance helps appliances operate at peak efficiency. For instance, cleaning refrigerator coils or air conditioner filters reduces energy consumption and improves performance, leading to lower utility bills and a reduced environmental impact.
2. **Extended Lifespan:** Proper care and timely repairs prevent minor issues from escalating into major problems. By addressing wear and tear early, you can significantly extend the lifespan of your appliances, delaying costly replacements and maximizing your investment.

3. **Prevention of Breakdowns:** Routine maintenance helps identify and resolve potential issues before they cause significant breakdowns. For example, cleaning washing machine filters or dryer vents prevents clogs and reduces the risk of malfunctions, ensuring appliances function smoothly.

4. **Improved Safety:** Regular checks and maintenance ensure that appliances operate safely, reducing the risk of accidents such as electrical fires or gas leaks. For example, inspecting and cleaning stovetop burners and oven vents can prevent fire hazards, while maintaining HVAC systems ensures proper ventilation and reduces health risks.

5. **Enhanced Performance:** Well-maintained appliances perform better and more reliably. A clean and properly functioning dishwasher, for instance, will clean dishes more effectively, while a regularly serviced air conditioner will maintain a consistent and comfortable indoor temperature.

6. **Cost Savings:** Preventive maintenance can save money in the long run. Addressing small issues before they require expensive repairs or replacements can lead to significant cost savings. Regular upkeep also helps maintain energy efficiency, reducing overall utility expenses.

7. **Increased Resale Value:** Appliances that are well-maintained retain their value better. When selling a home or appliances, demonstrating that they have been properly cared for can enhance their appeal and command a higher price.

In summary, regular maintenance of home appliances is vital for ensuring their efficiency, safety, and longevity. By incorporating routine checks and cleaning into your household routine, you can enjoy reliable performance, avoid costly repairs, and contribute to a safer, more energy-efficient home.

HOW CAN YOU EXPAND THE LIFESPAN OF YOUR WASHING MACHINE

A washing machine is usually your best friend – it makes your clothes all clean and your sheets feel brand new – until it decides to break down. The average life of a washing machine is around 10-13 years, however this lifespan can be cruelly cut

short. This is often caused by a lack of maintenance and care for your washing machine.



Is cleaning your washing machine really that necessary?

Cleaning the machine that cleans your clothes is definitely a necessary venture.

Not only does it ensure that the cleaning process is spick and span, it can also extend the life of your washing machine beyond the average life expectancy.

A regular clean of your machine will:

- Ensure it runs more efficiently
- Prevent any unpleasant smells
- Ensure hygienic washes
- Reduce mould build up
- Prevent scrud and rust forming

Since a washing machine is a primarily wet environment, there are many opportunities for bad bacteria and germs to form. Deep cleaning your machine

means that you will prevent overall bacterial build up, and have sparkling clean clothes every wash cycle.

The top tip for extending the life of your washing machine

It is, of course, regular cleaning! Not just any sort of cleaning though. A deep clean of each component of your machine means that there's no way for bacteria to slip through the cracks.

A washing machine is not just made up of the drum and the detergent drawer, and there are definitely areas unknown that everyone should be scrubbing.

How to deep clean a washing machine

1. Clean the seals

The rubber seals that line the door of your machine are a haven for mould if left alone. Unclean seals can lead to mould build up, smelly clothes and sometimes even leaks if it begins to decompose.

Because these seals are made of rubber, the best cleaning agent to use is actually just warm soapy water. Using bleach, vinegar or a harsh chemical can damage the seal and make it porous. This could further the mould build up as bacteria is easily able to grab onto porous surfaces.

After using your machine, it is recommended to leave the door ajar as long as possible. This will help keep the door seals in shape (so no gaps and leaks form) and increase air circulation for fighting mould.

2. Run an empty cycle

The drum, or the central part of your washing machine, is ultimately the most important component. It houses your clothes, linens and doonas and provides the wash and tumble portion of the machine. Luckily, the drum can be cleaned in the same way.

Running an empty cycle, or cleaning cycle if that's an option on your machine, with hot water and a bit of detergent should do the trick. This will reduce scud build up, a waxy residue left over from detergent and fabric softener overuse, and keep your clothes hygienic when being washed.

It is recommended to run an empty cycle every month or two, especially if you regularly use fabric softener.

3. Clean filter

The filter is such an important part of the washing machine. After cleaning your clothes and bed sheets, the graywater will run through the filter and out through the pipes into stormwater drains.

If you tend to leave tissues or receipts in your pockets before washing, then the filter may be full of loose debris. The best way to clean out the filter is by completing the following:

- Find the filter, which is usually toward the front lower part of your machine. Place a towel in front of your machine to prevent any water spillage.
- Remove the filter and clear out any lint, hair or debris from it. Rinse under running water and use a soft brush to get rid of any leftover grime.
- Check the filter housing for any blockages or build up. You can remove build up with a damp cloth.
- Place the filter back in. Run a short rinse cycle on your washing machine to ensure no leaks or problems have occurred.

4. Wipe down external surfaces

Finally, the outside of your washing machine also deserves a good scrub. Every couple of months, get a soft, damp cloth to wipe down the detergent drawer and the outside surfaces of your machine.

If there is any residue in your detergent drawer, you can remove and soak it in warm soapy water.

HOW TO SPRING CLEAN YOUR HOME APPLIANCES?

Refrigerator

Start by unplugging the refrigerator to ensure safety and save on energy while you clean. Empty the interior completely, removing all food items. Take out shelves

and drawers, and wash them with warm, soapy water. Next, focus on the coils, which are usually located at the back or underneath the fridge. Vacuum or brush off any dust and debris to help the appliance run more efficiently. Wipe down the interior walls and door seals with a mixture of water and baking soda. If your refrigerator has a manual defrost function, make sure to defrost any ice buildup. Lastly, clean the drip pan located underneath the appliance if your model has one, following the manufacturer's guidelines.

Oven and Stove

Begin by removing the oven racks and cleaning them with warm, soapy water or in the dishwasher if they're dishwasher-safe. For the interior of the oven, use an oven cleaner or a paste made from baking soda and water to scrub away grime. Be cautious with abrasive scrubbers as they can damage the surface. For the stove, remove the burner grates and drip pans, then wash them with hot, soapy water. Don't forget to wipe down the control panels and knobs with a damp cloth to remove any spills and residue.

Dishwasher

To start, clean the dishwasher filter by removing it and rinsing it under running water. Check the manufacturer's instructions for any specific cleaning tips related to the filter. Wipe down the door seals and edges with a damp cloth to prevent mold and mildew buildup. Run an empty cycle with a dishwasher cleaner or a cup of white vinegar placed on the top rack to help remove any lingering odors and residue. Finally, check the spray arms for any clogs and rinse them under water to ensure they're functioning properly.

Washing Machine

For the washing machine, run an empty cycle with a washing machine cleaner or a mixture of white vinegar and baking soda to clean the drum. Remove and clean the detergent dispenser drawer with warm, soapy water to prevent soap scum buildup. Wipe down the rubber gasket around the door with a cloth soaked in a mixture of vinegar and water to keep it free from mold and mildew. Also, inspect the hoses for any leaks or wear, and clean any filters according to the manufacturer's instructions.

Dryer

Start by cleaning the lint trap, removing and washing it with warm, soapy water as needed. Disconnect the dryer and use a dryer vent cleaning kit to clear out the vent hose, reducing the risk of fire and improving efficiency. Wipe down the interior drum with a damp cloth to remove any residue. Lastly, inspect the exhaust vent for any blockages or obstructions to ensure proper airflow.

Microwave

To clean the microwave, place a bowl of water with lemon juice or vinegar inside and run it on high for a few minutes. This will help loosen grime and make it easier to wipe down the interior with a damp cloth. Remove the turntable and wash it with warm, soapy water. For the exterior, use a damp cloth to clean the surface and any control buttons, ensuring the microwave looks and functions well.

Coffee Maker

Descal the coffee maker by running a descaling solution or a mixture of water and vinegar through the machine, following the manufacturer's instructions. Clean the carafe and filter basket with warm, soapy water. Finally, wipe down the exterior of the coffee maker with a damp cloth to remove any spills or coffee stains.

By following these detailed steps for each appliance, you can ensure that they remain in top working condition and contribute to a cleaner, more efficient home.

5 SIMPLE APPLIANCE MAINTENANCE TASKS TO LOWER YOUR ENERGY BILLS

Incorporate these simple appliance maintenance tasks into your winter routine to help save money on your energy bills.

Here are five straightforward appliance maintenance tasks that can help lower your energy bills:

1. Clean the Refrigerator Coils

Dusty or dirty refrigerator coils can force your fridge to work harder, consuming more energy. To maintain efficiency, clean the coils every six months. Locate them (usually at the back or underneath the appliance), and use a vacuum or a coil brush to remove dust and debris. Keeping the coils clean helps your refrigerator run more efficiently, reducing energy consumption.



2. Replace Air Filter in the HVAC System

A clogged or dirty air filter in your HVAC system can impede airflow, making your heating or cooling system work harder and use more energy. Check and replace the air filter every 1-3 months, depending on usage and filter type. This simple task ensures better air circulation, which can lower energy consumption and extend the life of your HVAC system.

3. Clean Dryer Vents and Lint Traps

A buildup of lint in the dryer vent and lint trap can cause your dryer to use more energy and increase drying times. Clean the lint trap after each use and the vent regularly to remove lint buildup. This not only improves dryer efficiency but also reduces the risk of fire hazards.

4. Unclog and Clean Dishwasher Spray Arms

If the spray arms in your dishwasher are clogged with food particles or mineral deposits, water circulation can be impaired, leading to inefficient washing and increased energy use. Remove the spray arms and clean them with warm water and a small brush. Regular maintenance ensures that your dishwasher uses less water and energy to clean your dishes effectively.

5. Check and Seal Window and Door Gaskets

Gaps or leaks around windows and doors can lead to drafts, forcing your heating or cooling systems to work harder to maintain a comfortable temperature. Inspect and seal any gaps or cracks in the gaskets around windows and doors. Proper sealing helps improve your home's insulation, reducing the workload on your HVAC system and lowering energy bills.

These maintenance tasks are easy to perform and can significantly improve the efficiency of your appliances, helping you save on energy costs over time.

CONCLUSION

Maintaining household appliances is essential for ensuring their longevity and efficiency, which directly impacts both performance and energy consumption. By regularly cleaning and inspecting your appliances, such as refrigerators, ovens, dishwashers, washing machines, and dryers, you can prevent common issues and avoid costly repairs. Simple tasks like cleaning refrigerator coils, replacing air filters, and removing lint from dryer vents not only enhance the functionality of your appliances but also contribute to lower energy bills and a safer home environment.



Incorporating these maintenance routines into your household care schedule can lead to significant long-term savings and improved appliance performance. By staying proactive and attentive to the needs of your appliances, you not only ensure their optimal operation but also create a more efficient and comfortable living space. Investing time in these tasks ultimately pays off with fewer disruptions, reduced energy costs, and a more sustainable home.

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