



Healthy Homes guide

Eight simple ways to improve the health of your home

Your home is more than just a place to live – it plays a vital role in your overall health and wellbeing. A safe, clean and well-ventilated home can help prevent illness, reduce stress and create a more comfortable living environment for you and your family.

Keeping your home healthy doesn't have to be complicated. Whether you're in the city or the country, in an apartment or a house, our Healthy Homes Guide is full of simple, practical tips to improve the health of your home, no matter where you live. It's about making small changes that have a big impact on your physical and mental wellbeing.



1. Fresh air

Good ventilation is essential for a healthy home, but sometimes homes can be hard to ventilate, especially in areas with high humidity or poor airflow.

What you can do:

- **Open windows regularly** to let fresh air in, even for just 10–15 minutes a day. If you can't open windows, use an exhaust fan to improve airflow.
- **Cross-ventilate** by opening windows or doors on opposite sides of the house to create a breeze.
- **Use air purifiers** if you live in an area with poor air quality or high pollen levels. Look for one with a HEPA filter.



2. Clean surfaces

Surfaces in your home can accumulate dust, allergens and germs. Regular cleaning helps maintain a healthy home environment.

This simple surface cleaner recipe is easy to make, effective and non-toxic.

Ingredients:	Instructions:
• 1 cup white vinegar • 1 cup water • 1 tablespoon baking soda • 10–20 drops of essential oil (e.g. lavender, eucalyptus or tea tree)	• In a spray bottle, combine water and vinegar. • Slowly add baking soda (<i>it may fizz at first</i>). • Add essential oils for a pleasant scent. • Shake well before use. • Spray on surfaces like countertops, tables and bathroom tiles. Wipe away with a clean cloth.



3. Mould free

Mould needs moisture to grow. Excess moisture in your home leads to mould and mildew, which can cause health issues.

What you can do:

Keep your house dry	Clean mould as soon as you see it	Know when to get help
• Fix leaks • Use extractor fans • Dry laundry outside • Wipe condensation daily • Open windows	• Wear gloves and a mask • Use warm, soapy water • Flush with a damp cloth • Wipe dry and keep dry	• Use a professional cleaner for mouldy areas over 1m² • Walls, ceilings or floors may need to be replaced • Ongoing issues? Get professional advice



4. Indoor plants

Plants are a fantastic way to boost the air quality in your home. They absorb toxins and release oxygen (plus, they look great).

Top indoor plants:

- **Spider plants** are great for removing carbon monoxide and formaldehyde, found in household building materials, furniture and cleaning products.
- **Peace lilies** remove toxins like benzene and trichloroethylene, found in smoke, adhesives and some cleaning products.
- **Aloe Vera** is known for its air-purifying properties and healing benefits.

Tip: Keep plants near windows where they'll get natural light. Remember to water them and gently wipe down leaves regularly to maximise their benefits.



5. Natural light

Natural light has a positive impact on your mood and health. Sunlight also helps your body produce vitamin D, essential to cardiovascular health, muscle function and mental health.

What you can do:

- **Open curtains and blinds** during the day to let in natural light.
- **Use mirrors strategically** to reflect sunlight and brighten rooms.
- **Switch to daylight-spectrum light bulbs** if natural light is limited in your home.



6. Decluttering

Clutter in your home can create stress and contribute to dust and allergens. A tidy space promotes peace of mind and makes cleaning easier.

What you can do:

- **Regularly declutter rooms**, keeping only what you use and love.
- **Use storage solutions** to keep your things organised and off the floor.
- **Clean regularly** to prevent dust buildup and allergens.



7. Home safety

Families with young children or pets should be extra cautious about potential hazards in the home.

What you can do:

- **Install safety gates** for stairs or dangerous areas.
- **Move dangerous items**, such as chemicals, cleaning products and sharps, out of reach.
- **Remove small objects and choking hazards** from your children or pets' play areas.
- **Use non-toxic paints and finishes** when redecorating or renovating.



8. Go green

An eco-friendly home has far less toxins and allergens. Small changes can make a big difference – and it doesn't have to be costly.

What you can do:

- **Switch to energy-efficient appliances** to reduce your carbon footprint (and save money).
- **Use natural cleaning products** to avoid harsh chemicals.
- **Reduce plastic use** by choosing reusable options and minimising single-use items.
- **Use glass or metal containers** to store food.



Building healthier homes, together

At Habitat for Humanity Australia, we know a safe and healthy home is more than just four walls – it's the foundation for strength, stability and self-reliance. A secure, well-maintained home empowers people and families to thrive, creating a healthier and more stable environment for generations to come.

Whether we're building homes, repairing them or providing useful resources like this guide, our vision is a world where everyone has a safe and decent place to live.



Want to learn more or get involved?

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