damngood inspection

Thanksgiving Hosting Checklist



Get your Florida home ready for a full house. Give it about an hour the week before. Most of it costs nothing.

1 Kitchen circuits and GFCI outlets

- [ ] Spread small appliances across different counter outlets, ideally on different circuits.
- [ ] Skip power strips and extension cords for the roaster or slow cooker.
- [ ] Find your electrical panel and label the kitchen breakers now.
- [ ] Test the GFCI outlets near the sink: plug in a small lamp, press **TEST** (it goes off), then **RESET** (it comes back on).

A breaker that keeps tripping with a normal load, or an outlet that feels warm or smells like burning: stop using it and call a licensed electrician.

2 The kitchen drain, the disposal and the septic tank

- [ ] Put grease in a can, let it cool, and throw it out with the trash.
- [ ] Scrape plates into the trash, not the sink.
- [ ] Run plenty of cold water with the disposal and feed it small amounts at a time.
- [ ] On septic? Spread the extra dishes and laundry over the holiday weekend, and keep grease and food scraps out of the drain.

3 Bathrooms and hot water

- [ ] Fix a running or weak-flushing toilet now.
- [ ] Put a plunger in every bathroom.
- [ ] Find the main water shutoff and the valve behind each toilet, and make sure they turn.
- [ ] Small water heater? Spread the showers out over the morning and run the dishwasher later in the day.

4 Smoke and carbon monoxide alarms

- [ ] Press the test button on each smoke alarm, and replace batteries in any that chirp.
- [ ] Gas appliances, a gas fireplace or an attached garage? Test your CO alarms the same way.

Fire safety groups recommend testing alarms once a month. The holiday is a good day to start the habit.

5 The guest room and the way in

- [ ] Make sure the guest room window opens and isn't blocked by furniture.
- [ ] Check for a working smoke alarm nearby and a clear path from the bed to the door.
- [ ] Walk in from the driveway after dark: steps, railings and outdoor lighting should be solid. Replace burned-out bulbs and fix any loose railing.

6 Turkey fryer safety

- [ ] Fry outside on a flat surface, well away from the house, the garage and the lanai screen.
- [ ] Make sure the turkey is fully thawed and dry.
- [ ] Don't overfill the pot. Find the oil line with water first.
- [ ] Never leave the fryer unattended. Keep kids and pets away.
- [ ] Keep a fire extinguisher rated for grease fires close by. Never use water on a grease fire.

Indoors: stay in the kitchen while things are cooking, and keep towels and paper away from the burners.