

Clean Your Gutters for Spring

Spring-cleaning does not have to be restricted to indoor chores. If you own your property or are renting a home, it is a good idea to inspect the outside of your house and perform the annual maintenance chores that will keep it in good shape. One of the most important tasks facing you is cleaning your gutters. Don't let fall leaves and wind-blown debris pile up in your gutters, because when the spring rains hit, there could be a backup that might cause excessive dripping, especially after winter thaws. This drainage can trickle under the roof and become a leak in your ceiling, or make a path down the side of the exterior and leach into your basement to cause damage there. It may be hard to believe, but a handful of clogged leaves or twigs or an out-of-place bird's nest can create major problems requiring expensive repairs.

The best time to clean your gutters is in early spring, but any time during the year is fine. Plan your work for a good-weather day. Check the forecast and start early in case it starts to rain later. Assemble your tools and equipment first. You will need a sturdy stepladder, a trowel, a hand-held leaf blower or a rake, along with gloves to protect your hands.

Secure the ladder in a stable, level area near the house. Check to make sure it won't slip. Wear sturdy shoes that will help to keep your balance while on the ladder. Take the rake with you and climb as far as you need to in order to reach the gutter. Use your hand-size rake to gently loosen mud, debris, and leaves from the gutter, taking care not to push too forcefully, which could cause breakage. Use your leaf blower as needed to scatter collected foliage. Remove as much as you can. Then carefully descend the ladder, move it a few feet to the right or left, and repeat the process until you have cleaned all the gutters along the roof.

Aim to spill the debris into a central pile below, on the ground, if possible. You might want to lay out a large, disposable tarp for this purpose. Then simply wrap it up when you are done, and discard it in the trash. Or you can use a permanent, re-usable tarp by gathering the debris with a shovel or rake and bagging it for the trash or transporting it by wheelbarrow to the compost heap, if you have one. Then clean off your ladder and tools, putting them away where you can easily find them the next time a task of this sort comes along.

If several tall trees overhang your roof, you may need to clean the gutters several times a year to prevent leaf and twig buildup. Those who are wary of heights or who lack the proper tools should hire an experienced worker to do the job for them. It's not worth having an accident if you are uncomfortable with heights or lack suitable equipment.

Source: <http://www.articlecircle.com>

About the Author

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