How My Home Works



A practical guide for anyone stepping in.

The everyday details someone else needs when I'm away, recovering, or unable to manage things myself.

WHEN SOMEONE ELSE NEEDS TO TAKE OVER,

THE EVERYDAY DETAILS MATTER.

The right key. The heating controls. The dog's dinner.
The things you know without thinking about them

This guide belongs to:
Household name and address

Prepared by / last updated
Name, contact number and date

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

You know your home. Does someone else?

When my dad landed in hospital, we suddenly realised how much we didn't know about running the house. Things he handled without thinking became things we needed help figuring out.

That experience inspired this guide.

Whether you're preparing for an unexpected hospital stay, a planned trip, or sharing household responsibilities, this workbook helps you put what you know somewhere someone else can find it.

Keep it accessible and current

Tell your chosen helper where this guide lives. Review it when equipment, contacts or routines change.

Keep sensitive passwords, codes and financial information in a separate, secure location. Record how an authorised person can obtain access.

Make it useful

- Start with the essentials. You don't need to finish everything at once.
- Write for someone who has never used your household systems.
- Include the small quirks you usually handle automatically.
- Add labelled photos where they would help.
- Mark anything that doesn't apply.
- Ask someone to try your instructions, then fill in any gaps.

Amy Friesen
Founder of Tea & Toast

START HERE

The home and its occupants

Full address, entry directions, and names of people or pets in house.

Call this person first

Full name, phone number and email.

Time-sensitive responsibilities

Also include anything to leave alone.

If there is immediate danger, use local emergency services. This workbook records household information; it is not an emergency response or repair manual

GETTING INSIDE

Keys and entry

Which entrance should someone use?
Who has a spare key, and how can they be reached?
Are there separate keys for the garage, mailbox or other areas?
Do any doors or locks need a particular technique?

Parking and building access

Where should someone park?
Is a visitor permit, building fob or concierge arrangement required?

GETTING INSIDE

Alarm system

Where can the code and instructions be obtained? How do they disarm it on arrival and rearm it when leaving? Whom should they call if the alarm activates?

Smart locks and garage doors

How does an authorised helper get access?
What is the backup if their phone, the app or the power is unavailable?

Before leaving

Which doors and windows should be checked?
Which lights or systems should stay on?

PEOPLE WHO CAN HELP

Family, neighbour, trusted friend
Name / role / phone / backup number. Say what each person can help with.

Home and building support
Landlord or condo management, plumber, electrician, and heating service. Name/phone.

PEOPLE WHO CAN HELP

Utilities, insurance, and other services
Provider/contact/where relevant reference details are stored.
Include alarm monitoring if applicable.

Additional contacts to note

PEOPLE AND PETS

People who depend on me
Name, support or arrangements needed, usual schedule, details as needed.

Pets and their routines
Names, feeding, walking, supplies, and any handling needs. Vet contact. Where are their care instructions?

WATER, ELECTRICITY, AND ESSENTIAL SYSTEMS

Water
Main shut-off location, labelled photo location and plumber contact. Note well or sump pump equipment.

Electricity and heating fuel
Panel location, circuit labels, and service contact. Note the fuel supply and who handles any problems.

Other household systems

HEATING, COOLING AND COMFORT

Thermostat
Location, usual temperature settings, steps to adjust the temperature, and how to return to the normal schedule:

Additional controls
Are there separate thermostats, baseboard heaters, fans, humidifiers, or room controls? Where are they, and how are they used?

Apps and remote controls
Which app or remote is needed? Can the system be operated manually?

HEATING, COOLING AND COMFORT

Household quirks
Are there controls that should stay on? Rooms that need different settings? Anything someone should avoid changing?

Maintenance and help
Filter type and location, replacement schedule, manual location, service company.

INTERNET AND TELEVISION

Internet
Wi-Fi network name, connection details, modem and router location
provider and support number:

Television and audio
Operating instructions

SMART DEVICES

Smart devices
Lights, cameras, doorbell, or voice controls. Which app? How does someone get access?

Important details
What should stay plugged in or switched on? Are any devices linked to alarms, accessibility equipment or other essential systems?

EVERYDAY APPLIANCES

Laundry
Washer and dryer steps/usual settings/detergent location/anything to avoid.

Kitchen
Dishwasher, stove, and other frequently used appliances. Include any unusual switches or controls.

Other essentials
Cleaning equipment, accessibility equipment, or another item someone may need. Manual and help contact.

HOW TO USE:

Copy this page for each appliance or system that needs its own explanation.

Equipment name: _____

Location: _____

Make and model: _____

What it does: _____

Before you begin

What needs to be plugged in, switched on, or checked?

_____

_____

Step-by-step instructions

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

Quirks, and things to avoid

_____