

How to do a home inventory.



Right now, can you remember every item that's in your home? And how much you paid for it? And where the receipt is?

Chances are... you can't. And that's common. But, that's also why it's smart to have a record of the information.

When you have a **home inventory**, it'll help you purchase a home insurance policy with the right amount of coverage. You'll know the value of everything in your home, so you'll know how much it should be insured for.

In addition, it'll make it easier to settle a claim, if the worst were to happen.

What is a home inventory?

A home inventory is a detailed list of all your possessions. It's especially important for those big-ticket items, but the more inclusive it is, the better.

What should I include in my home inventory?

If you own it, list it. Document what's in your home from the basement to the attic, and don't forget about any detached structures, like a garage or shed. If you're starting only with a high-level list, make sure your most prized possessions are on it, like appliances, electronics, art and jewelry.

What should my home inventory look like?

To take inventory of your home, all you need is a simple spreadsheet. Create a page for each room in your house, condo or apartment. Leave room to list:

- The item

- A description of the item
- The cost of the item
- The serial number (if applicable)
- The year you purchased it
- The place you purchased it from

Have the original receipts? Keep them in a safe space. When you can prove the purchase, it'll be even easier to get things replaced.

Should I take photos or videos, too?

If your home is damaged, it could help to show what the inside and outside had looked like, along with what was in each room. Sure, it's an extra step. But, it's one that could be worth taking.

Go through each room and snap a few photos — one from every angle. When you come across an especially valuable item, snap a separate picture of it.

If you'd rather take a video, take a walk through your home and add a little commentary. Say what room you're in, and describe what you see as you scan. Tip: Make each room its own video clip, so you can find things faster.

When should I take a home inventory?

If you're just moving in, taking inventory is easy. As you unpack, you'll see everything you own, item by item.

If you've lived in the same home for quite a while, consider doing one room every weekend. It can seem like an overwhelming undertaking, but breaking it up can make it more manageable.

And always remember: It's better to have an inventory (even if it's incomplete) than to have nothing.

When should I update my home inventory?

As a general rule of thumb, check your home inventory once a year, because you may have gotten rid of something that's listed.

Additionally, when you make a new purchase, add its information to your inventory.

Where should I keep my home inventory?

Every asset of your home inventory should be stored somewhere safe. It should be somewhere it could survive major damage, because that's when you'll need it most. We recommend creating a digital copy — one you can access anywhere, any time. But, if you'd prefer a paper copy, be sure to keep it in a fireproof safe or outside of the home (or both).

For more information about your home insurance coverage, find an agent near you.