

HDB home care guide: who fixes ceiling leaks, windows and tiles in your flat

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Most Singaporeans only read the **HDB home care guide** after something has already gone wrong, usually a water stain spreading across the bathroom ceiling. It is far cheaper to know the rules before that happens. HDBâ??s MyNiceHome pages spell out who looks after what inside and outside your flat, and a few of the details surprise people.

Here is the useful part, pulled together so you can check your own flat this weekend.

HDB home care guide: who fixes what

The split is simple. You look after everything inside the flat, which covers floor and wall finishes, windows, sanitary fittings, doors and gates. Your Town Council looks after the common areas outside, such as corridors, void decks, lifts, water tanks, public lighting and external facade walls.

If a crack runs along the outside wall of your block, it is a Town Council matter. If it is on the wall of your living room, it is yours.



Source: HDB / MyNiceHome

Ceiling leaks: neighbours share the bill

Ceiling leaks are common in older flats, especially from bathrooms and toilets, where the waterproof membrane and screed wear out over time. HDB tells owners to look for water marks or stains that run from the ceiling down the wall.

- The owners of the upper and lower flats share responsibility for the repair and split the cost.
- On the top floor, the leak is likely to come from the roof, so you contact your Town Council.
- If the leak is in a second-floor flat and falls into the void deck, the cost is split between the Town Council and the owner.
- Re-screeding, where the tiles are removed and the membrane and screed replaced, is described as the most effective fix.

New flat owners get an extended warranty of five years for ceiling leakages and external seepage, and ten years for spalling concrete. Note the catch on the first one: the warranty ends if you change the floor tiles or tamper with the waterproofing. Think twice before a bathroom retile in year three.

Spalling concrete is when the steel bars inside the concrete deteriorate, often in humid bathrooms. HDBâ??s prevention advice is to repaint ceilings regularly, improve ventilation in wet areas and seal cracks promptly.

Windows: check them every six months

This is the one with real teeth. HDB asks owners to inspect windows at least every six months using its 3Cs: Check, Clean and Change.

- Casement windows: check the fasteners for rust or looseness, clean and oil the joints, and have aluminium rivets replaced with stainless steel by an approved contractor.
- Sliding windows: check the safety stoppers and angle strips, clean the tracks and replace worn parts through an approved contractor.

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Use a BCA-approved window contractor from HDBâ??s directory. A fallen window can seriously injure someone below, and owners or occupants who neglect their windows may face a fine of up to S$20,000 and/or up to one year in jail.



Source: HDB / MyNiceHome

Tiles and wall cracks

Popping tiles come from temperature changes and water absorption weakening the adhesive. Who repairs them depends on the age of your flat.

- Within the one-year defect liability period: HDB repairs the original HDB-provided tiles.
- Up to 15 years: HDB offers goodwill repairs for original tiles.
- Beyond 15 years: hire a private contractor.

While you wait, wear gloves to remove loose tiles and cover the area so nobody trips. Hairline wall cracks, caused by materials expanding and contracting, can be sealed with a flexible sealant or elastomeric paint. Wide cracks need a contractor, and external cracks go to the Town Council.

A few habits worth keeping

HDB suggests setting aside a home maintenance budget and inspecting regularly. Contractor engagements are private arrangements between you and the provider, so get written quotes. HDB also reminds owners that it never asks for money transfers or bank log-in details over the phone, and you can call the ScamShield helpline on 1799 if a caller says otherwise.

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If your block is due for upgrading, our note on the Pasir Ris Drive 1 HIP poll shows how the vote works, and the 2026 upgrading list covers the neighbourhoods selected. Renting out a room? Check the HDB bedroom rental rules first, and if your water bill jumps, run the 10-minute meter leak test.

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