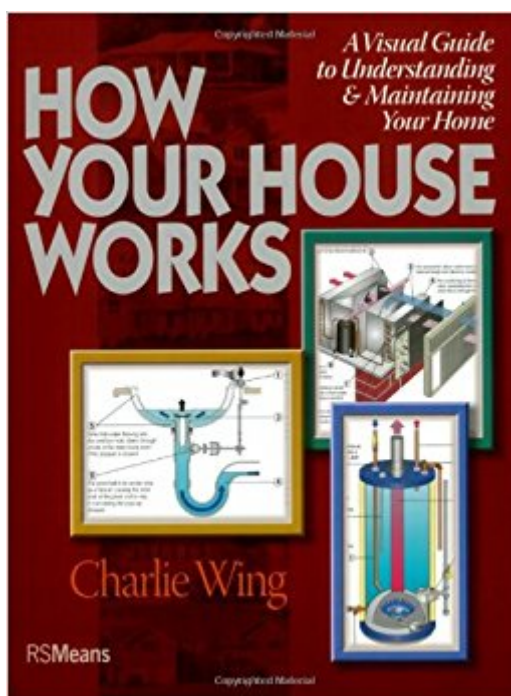


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# How Your House Works: A Visual Guide To Understanding & Maintaining Your Home



## Synopsis

Why is my faucet leaking, my toilet running, or my dishwasher refusing to start? Can I fix it myself? What's causing the heating system to smell bad or the foundation to crack? Do I need an air filtration system? Is the new "engineered lumber" as good as conventional wood? These are just a few examples of questions homeowners face when repairs are needed, or when a new house or addition is being planned. There's no question that it pays to be an informed consumer. Knowledge of your home's systems helps you control repair and construction costs and make sure the correct elements are being installed or replaced. This book uncovers the mysteries behind just about every major appliance and building element in your house. Clear, "exploded" drawings show you exactly how these things should be put together and how they function — what to check if they don't work, and what you can do that might save you having to call in a professional. The easy-to-understand pictures and explanations on every page get right to the point, helping you understand how things work, what can go wrong, and how to trouble-shoot a problem. FEATURES: Virtually everything in your house is included: Electrical — circuit breakers and grounding, service, outlets, lamps and fixtures. Heating and air conditioning — gas, electrical and oil - ductwork and piping, thermostats, central and window AC units, humidifiers and dehumidifiers, and air filtering systems. Plumbing — kitchen and bath fixtures, piping, water heaters, traps and vents, septic tanks, pumps and water softener systems — even sprinkler systems and swimming pool filters/heaters. Major household appliances — from kitchen to laundry. Foundation, framing, doors and windows — including issues like drainage and radon, types of framing and how it supports the house, and all types of doors and windows.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Crystal-clear illustrations and explanations... It will quickly become the operator's manual for your house." -- SmartHomeowner magazine, 2007  
"From toilet tanks to table lamps, this text tells you how it all works." -- This Old House magazine, December 2007, "Gifts for the New Homeowner"  
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A must-have reference for every homeowner, handyman, and contractor - for repair, remodeling, and new construction.

Moving into an apartment for the first time...and on your own, you start to realize that you did not know as much about how a house actually works because you never had to work on them. The landlord or your parents did that. I read this book to get a general understanding of how all of the components worked after I was dumbfounded and felt embarrassed for having to call maintenance for instructions on how to work a breaker box or unclog a toilet. Yep...that was me but this book saved me from being embarrassed every again. Highly recommend!

I bought this and two other "visual guide to your home" books from . This book is by far the best of the lot. I can't say enough good things about it. Here's why:

1. CURRENCY AND COVERAGE. Published in 2007, it's the most current title, and covers modern home fixtures better than the others. It's also very comprehensive in it's coverage
2. QUALITY. The diagrams and cutaways are highly detailed, and the best that I've seen - they're also full color, compared to the black and white in other books.
3. CLARITY AND ORGANIZATION. The explanations are straightforward and insight, with just enough detail to understand home systems.
4. TROUBLESHOOTING TIPS. Every

topic includes a sidebar containing "Before hiring a professional" troubleshooting tips. They explain the 2 to 3 most likely problems with the system, along with the solutions. I just used this book to troubleshoot our malfunctioning garbage disposal. The troubleshooting tip was 100% right. I made the fix in 2 minutes and saved \$180+ on the cost of replacing the disposal. The book just paid for itself 10 times over. I have 30+ books on home building. This one has a special place on my bookshelf. If you own a house, buy this book. You'll thank me the first time you have the satisfaction of fixing something that goes wrong!

My husband and I bought some rental properties almost a year ago and I have been thrown into property management. I have gone back to my copy of How Your House Works over and over again during the past year. Although the book is not a repair manual, it has been EXTREMELY helpful as I have tried to determine what things I can repair myself. When I originally bought this book, I wondered if it would be a waste of money because it seems like information that would be readily available online. What seems to happen, though, is that I look online for information, find way too much unrelated stuff, become more confused, and then remember to check this book. The diagrams are simple, and easy to understand. The information is not brand specific (like most of the info online). Sometimes I wish there were more details, but it is useful information anyway. I highly recommend this book to other part-time landlords or property managers. Most homeowners who are not licensed contractors or repair-people would really, really benefit from this book. This book would make a superb housewarming gift.

The book claims to be a "visual guide to understanding & maintaining your home". It accomplishes 2 of the 3 well: It's a very visual guide, and it did help me understand my home. Or at least, homes in general. The pictures are very well drawn, although not always with complete detail - obviously you can't show everything. Where it falls short is in the "maintaining" section. The "maintain" section is mostly limited to sidebars on each page "Before you call a Plumber/Electrician/Etc". There's good and bad here. The good is that it provides specific tips on what to do when something goes wrong. For instance, "If the toilet leaks around its base, replace the wax ring." But - it doesn't tell you the first thing about HOW to do so. Now, there's admittedly all kinds of guides online, or in other books, for how to do this. And one book cannot do everything. It's easy enough to search for "how to replace the wax ring on a toilet" and bring up all kinds of instructions - probably even detailed videos of it. But it's equally easy to search for "my toilet leaks at the base". If I'm going to have to "just Google it" to fix the problem, why should I look it up in this book at all?

There are many home maintenance books on the market today and I had to sift through a portion of them before finding this gem. There are two great things about this book which can be hard to find together. First...the pictures. I believe that the saying "a picture speaks a thousand words" definitely applies here. Secondly, the book gives advice of what to do after the house malfunctions but before you call the mechanic. The book is a bit expensive (probably due to all the ink in the pics lol) but I would still recommend purchasing it if you are willing to follow the applicable advice and do a bit of tinkering if an appliance, plumbing, etc acts up. Remember, this is BASIC home maintenance information. This book does not prepare you to be a plumber, foundation specialist, etc. When the home does malfunction, as long as you have a bit of courage, a few minutes to approach the problem, and the eagerness to successfully apply this book's advice, I believe you'll have a significant chance of saving yourself money that may have been previously paid to mechanics.

Love this book! It is very helpful and useful for the homeowner with little of even no skills,

I got this on Friday at 12:30 and read the entire book in 3 hours (minus some of the over-the-top things like "How Your Pool Pump System Works"). This book is AWESOME, because:- It shows a diagram of each system that it explains.- Many of the systems have "Before you call a [Technician]", which explain things you can do yourself before calling a repair person.- These before-you-call diagrams have each necessary part labeled, so you can easily identify it.- The diagrams aren't "real" pictures, rather more like the clear diagrams you'd see in a science book. Recently, the dishwasher leaked water all over our kitchen floor. We called maintenance, who called a plumbing company (no cost to us). With this book, we could've fixed the problem ourselves. You'll get your \$\$\$ back.

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