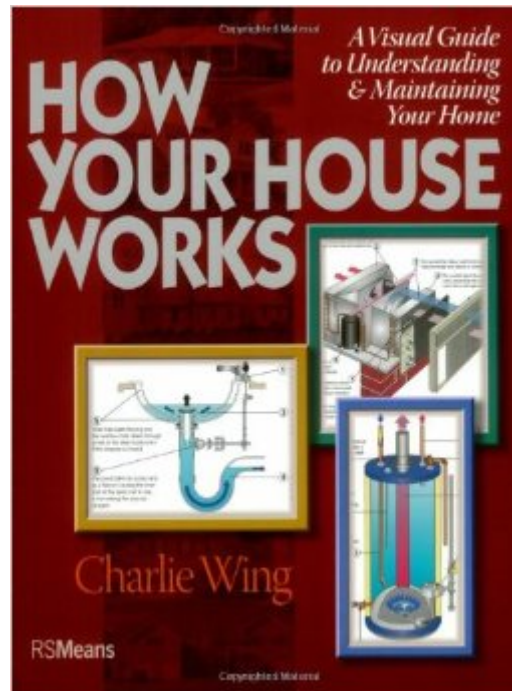


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# How Your House Works: A Visual Guide To Understanding & Maintaining Your Home



## 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

Paperback: 152 pages

Publisher: R.S. Means Company; 1 edition (June 30, 2007)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0876290152

ISBN-13: 978-0876290156

Product Dimensions: 8.5 x 0.5 x 10.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.4 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars — See all reviews (52 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #754,241 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #16 in Books > Law >

Administrative Law > Housing & Urban Development #780 in Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home >

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## Customer Reviews

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!

I have numerous reference books but this is the first one to actually describe to me how the device functions. The "Before calling the...(technician)" feature was a brilliant idea and a potential money saver for most homeowners. My son-in-law teaches middle school science and will be using this book for its wonderful schematics. My other reference books are stashed away on a bookshelf - this one stays on my desk where it is good and handy!

What a great book! The fantastic detailed color illustrations are clearer than looking at the object itself. The very first day I had the book, I was able to repair a broken flush handle on my toilet. In my area a plumber charges \$100 just to come to the house, so the book has already paid for itself four times. I'm giving the book as Christmas presents to all of my homeowning friends.

After buying my first house, I knew I had a lot of work ahead of me and wanted as much help as I could get. I looked at lots of reviews of DIY books, and this one seemed great. It is kind of a neat

book, and does have some good information, but this isn't a book for a do-it-yourselfer. I'm new at it, to be sure, but even so, most of the information in this book is much, much too basic, and all the information inside could easily be found online. This book might be good for someone who usually calls professional help for home problems and wants to save a few bucks here or there.

I have four general home improvement books and a score of special topic wiring, carpentry, decking, landscaping, etc., books which have helped immensely as a homeowner seeking to do some of the inevitably needed work without calling a contractor. A friend who has zero handyman skills just purchased a home, so I searched to find a good current book on the subject of general home maintenance as a gift (mine are 10 years old or so). Unfortunately I stumbled upon this book with "rave" reviews and ordered it blindly. All in all this book is a waste of time for anyone but the near sighted little old lady living in a rented condo who needs to know what a fuse is. It offers no real repair advice to speak of. What it does is give a simplistic, generalized diagrammatic idea of what things in the home do (such as a furnace, a water heater, a microwave oven, etc.) Then it instructs you to see whether it is really broken in an extremely simplistic way, under the theme of "before you call for help." If the item in question actually is broken, instead of suffering from say, a burned out fuse or a burned out light bulb (actual example), there is no repair instruction of any caliber to be found. It is merely a book to determine whether you need someone else to fix the problem or if there is actually no problem to begin with. This book is useless except for previously mentioned blue haired bespectacled tenants.

I gave this book to my son when he bought his first house. It explains the mechanics of each individual system in his home and familiarizes him with the vocabulary associated with them. He doesn't like to fix things himself but he reports that he's now able to diagnose problems around the house and to communicate effectively with repairmen.

Buy this book for the diagrams, OR as an introductory book for newbies. This book consists mainly of diagrams -- very large, clear, detailed diagrams that show how a house works. We own several books on home maintenance, repair, and home improvement. Those other books offer much more advice on repairs and improvement, but the diagrams and photos are often inadequate -- not enough diagrams/photos, or not clear enough, or not labeled and explained enough. This book is the opposite of that; it has wonderful diagrams, with arrows and labels for the parts, plus brief text explanations and hints. This book has the best diagrams, so we use it as a supplement to the other

books. The book includes some "how to" information for basic maintenance and common, easy repairs. However, it is not a comprehensive manual for DIY home repair and improvement. For DIY, you will want to buy additional books for more depth. I was pleasantly surprised at what diagrams were included in the book. For example, there are 6 pages of water heater diagrams, for 6 types of water heaters -- electric (tank), gas (tank), electric tankless, gas tankless, BoilerMate (Trademark) water heater, and solar water heater. Diagrams showing major appliances are also included -- refrigerators, dishwashers, laundry washers, dryers, air conditioners, ranges, ovens, garbage disposal, vacuums. The clothes washer diagrams just show a belt-driven top-loader machine. No diagrams of the newer front-loading type. The index is not bad; it could be improved by adding more terms. For example it has an entry for "evaporative coolers", but not for "swamp coolers".

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