# Carbon Monoxide Detector Maintenance

A comprehensive guide on maintaining and testing carbon monoxide detectors to ensure they are functioning correctly for home safety. Regular maintenance and testing are crucial for the effective operation of these devices.

### Step 1: Location Check

Evaluate the placement of carbon monoxide detectors to ensure they are located near sleeping areas and on every floor of the home, including the basement. Detectors should not be located near windows, heating vents, or fuel-burning appliances to prevent false alarms or missed detections.

### Step 2: Visual Inspection

Perform a visual inspection to check for any signs of damage to the detectors, such as cracks or broken sensors. Ensure that the detectors are not blocked by furniture or curtains, which can impede airflow and sensor function.

### Step 3: Battery Replacement

Replace the batteries in battery-operated detectors at least once a year, or when the low battery signal sounds. For detectors with sealed batteries, follow the manufacturer's guidelines for replacement, which is typically every 5-10 years.

### Step 4: Function Test

Test the carbon monoxide detectors monthly by pressing the 'test' button on each unit. This checks the alarm’s circuitry and confirms the audible alarm is working. If the detector does not sound the alarm during the test, refer to the manual for troubleshooting or replace the unit.

### Step 5: Sensor Cleaning

Clean the detectors annually using a vacuum with a soft brush attachment. Gently vacuum around the detector's air vents to remove accumulated dust and debris, which can hinder sensor accuracy.

### Step 6: Expiration Check

Carbon monoxide detectors have a limited lifespan, typically 5 to 7 years. Check the manufacture date on the back of each unit and replace outdated detectors with new ones to ensure continued protection.

### Step 7: Record Maintenance

Keep a maintenance log for each carbon monoxide detector detailing location, dates of battery changes, cleaning, and testing. Note the expiration date of each unit to facilitate timely replacements.

## General Notes

### False Alarms

If a carbon monoxide detector sounds an alarm and you suspect it is a false alarm, reset the detector and ventilate the area. If the alarm persists, evacuate immediately and call emergency services.

### Detector Type

Be aware that there are different types of carbon monoxide detectors, including battery-operated, plug-in, and hardwired. Each type may have specific maintenance requirements detailed in the owner's manual.

### Certification Check

When purchasing new carbon monoxide detectors, ensure that they are certified by a recognized safety standards organization, such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL), to meet current safety standards.