

Insurance 101

An Inventory is a Homeowner Best Practice

While perhaps not the most exciting of projects, building a home inventory is really a homeowner best practice. And as September is the peak month for the Atlantic hurricane season, you might want to get started right away.

A home inventory actually has front-end and back-end benefits: to ensure you have enough coverage now for your possessions and to have a record of what you own in case you need to file a claim down the road. Here's more on each of these benefits:

Do you have enough coverage? If your home is destroyed in a covered loss, the last thing you want to discover is that you didn't have enough insurance to replace what you lost. The best way to avoid this is to document your belongings. Then consider using a tool such as our [Personal Property Analyzer](#),™ which enables you to quickly and easily estimate the value of your home's contents.

Also, keep in mind that some items, such as jewelry and art work, may have increased in value over the years, so you may need to bump up your insurance. Contact your Independent Agent to review your coverage.

Know what you own. You don't want to wait until disaster strikes to try and catalog what's gone. Building a home inventory now can be a huge help later on and speed your claim settlement process.

Here are a few tips on creating an inventory:

- Record your possessions digitally or in a notebook. Be sure to note where you bought them, their brand, model and/or serial number, and keep track of the receipts. Open drawers and closets, and document items not immediately visible
- Photograph or videotape belongings. On the back of photos, note where you bought the item and the make. You might also take a photo of the receipts. If using video, be sure to comment on where and when the items were purchased.

Upload photos and videos so you have a digital record, and keep prints and copies of photos, videos, and digital and printed records in a place other than your home, such as in a safe deposit box or with a relative

- Use a home inventory application. There are a number of home inventory apps on the market. The Insurance Information Institute offers free online home inventory software, [Know Your Stuff® Home Inventory](#), as well as iPhone and Android versions for cell phones

Sources: Insurance Information Institute, AARP