



HOW TO PROTECT YOUR HOME AND GARDEN DURING WINTER

If you live in an area with harsh winters, you've probably seen first-hand some of the problems the season can cause to your living area. But taking the proper steps to prepare for frigid temperatures and freezing precipitation can help give your home and garden a better chance of emerging in the spring unscathed.

Read on for tips on how to protect your property during the coldest months of the year.

HOME CARE CONSIDERATIONS

A primary concern during the winter months is staying warm. While heaters and blankets can go a long way towards this, another option to consider is adding weather strips along doors and windows to prevent cold air from coming in. This has the added benefit of preventing warm air from leaking out, which can save you money on power bills.¹

Another important task is making sure your gutters are unobstructed before snow or ice start entering the picture. If your gutters aren't free of leaves and other debris, snow and ice may not melt or drain properly. Once you've cleared them out, you may want to consider installing gutter guards to make this process easier in the future.¹

It's also critical to make sure your home's heating system is in good condition. Check your furnace filter to see if it needs replacing, as clogged filters can reduce the efficiency of heating your home. You also may want to consider scheduling a professional inspection to ensure the belts and overall performance of the furnace are working properly.²

And don't forget about your pipes, either. Adding foam insulation to pipes in unheated areas such as basements, attics, and crawl spaces provides a layer of protection that may help guard them against the severe cold. And when the weather gets extra cold, turning your faucets on to drip a small trickle of water is all it takes to prevent ice buildup within your pipes.³

GARDEN CARE CONSIDERATIONS

Winter is tough on outdoor plants, but there are several ways to help minimize the risk of your garden suffering from frost or freeze damage.

Portable plants can be brought inside to protect them from the elements. This should be done once the outdoor temperature reaches 45 degrees Fahrenheit or below.¹

For plants that must remain outdoors, covering them with blankets, sheets, or specialized frost cloths can retain ground heat and help protect against freezing temperatures. It's important to ensure the covering doesn't touch the plants directly, so use stakes, patio furniture, posts, or other items to keep the covering hoisted above the top of the plants.⁴

When it comes to garden beds, coating the soil with compost or manure before the ground freezes can help the plants retain nutrients during the frigid months ahead. Afterwards, add some straw or mulch on top to help keep your soil free from erosion and weeds.⁵

Finally, if you have trees or shrubs, don't prune them in the leadup to winter. Pruning can wound the plant tissue, and the extreme cold can prevent proper healing.⁵

A LITTLE PLANNING GOES A LONG WAY

The key to successfully protecting your home and garden during winter is preparation. By performing simple checks and taking action early, you can reduce the risk of potential costly repairs and give your home and garden the best chance to make it through the winter months.

¹Albarda, Valerie. "Winterize Your Home: 14 Strategies for Maximum Efficiency." *Lowe's*, 2025.

²Bennett, Jessica. "Prep for Winter with Our Fall Maintenance Checklist." *Better Homes & Gardens*, 2025.

³Bennett, Jessica. "6 Ways to Prevent Frozen Pipes." *Better Homes & Gardens*, 2025.

⁴Steil, Aaron. "How to Protect Plants from Frost and Freeze." *Iowa State University*, 2024.

⁵Boeckmann, Catherine. "How to Winterize and Protect Your Garden" *Almanac*, 2025.

