

WINTER HOME MAINTENANCE CHECKLIST (NYC & NJ CLIMATE)

Purpose: Use this checklist each late fall or early winter to prepare your home for cold weather, snow, and ice.

I. EXTERIOR & ROOF

- Roof & Gutters
 - Look for missing or loose shingles (from the ground or with a safe view).
 - Make sure gutters and downspouts are clear of leaves and debris.
 - Confirm downspouts discharge away from the foundation.
- Siding & Masonry
 - Inspect siding, brick, and stucco for cracks or gaps.
 - Check caulking around windows, doors, and penetrations.
 - Seal small gaps to reduce drafts and water entry.
- Walkways & Steps
 - Check concrete, pavers, and stairs for uneven spots or loose railings.
 - Plan where snow will be shoveled and where you will apply sand or de-icer.

II. DOORS, WINDOWS & DRAFT CONTROL

- Windows
 - Check for drafts around frames and sills.
 - Install weatherstripping where needed.
 - Use plastic window film or heavy curtains on very drafty windows.
- Doors
 - Inspect door sweeps and thresholds.
 - Adjust or replace worn weatherstripping.

III. HEATING SYSTEM & FILTERS

- Boiler / Furnace
 - Schedule annual service for boilers or furnaces.
 - Listen for unusual noises or short cycling.
- Filters & Vents
 - Replace or clean furnace filters as needed.
 - Make sure supply and return vents are clear of furniture and dust.
- Thermostats

- Test your thermostat before the first cold snap.
- Consider programmable or smart thermostats for comfort and savings.

IV. PLUMBING & FREEZE PROTECTION

- Outdoor Faucets
 - Disconnect hoses and drain exterior spigots.
 - Use insulated covers where appropriate.
- Pipes in Cold Areas
 - Identify pipes in unheated basements, crawls, or near exterior walls.
 - Add insulation sleeves where practical.
 - In extreme cold, consider letting a small drip run on vulnerable fixtures.
- Main Shutoff
 - Make sure everyone in the home knows where the main water shutoff is and how to use it in an emergency.

V. SAFETY EQUIPMENT

- Smoke & Carbon Monoxide Detectors
 - Test all detectors and change batteries if needed.
 - Make sure there is a working detector on each level of the home, especially near sleeping areas.
- Fire Extinguishers
 - Confirm you have at least one multi-purpose fire extinguisher.
 - Check that the pressure gauge is in the green zone.
- Space Heaters
 - Use only UL-listed heaters with tip-over protection.
 - Keep space heaters at least 3 feet away from anything that can burn.
 - Never leave space heaters unattended or running while you sleep.

VI. EMERGENCY PREP

- Basic Supplies
 - Flashlights with fresh batteries
 - Bottled water and shelf-stable food
 - Warm blankets and extra hats/gloves
- Power Outage Plan
 - Know how to report an outage.
 - Keep phones and backup power banks charged.

VII. OPTIONAL WINTER UPGRADES & CHECKS

- Attic Insulation & Air Sealing
 - Additional insulation in attics and sealing air leaks can improve comfort and lower bills.
- Storm Doors & Windows
 - Storm units can reduce drafts and protect primary windows and doors.
- Masonry & Concrete Tune-Up
 - Before deep winter, consider repairing loose steps, cracks, or trip hazards.

Disclaimer: This checklist is general and may not cover every home or system. Always follow manufacturer instructions for equipment and consult licensed professionals for heating, electrical, and plumbing work.

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