

Fall and Winter Prep Checklist

The autumn pass that decides how hard the salt season is indoors. Print it, work through it before the first cold snap, and keep the safety checks together.

The order to work in

Fall is the last comfortable moment for anything that has to dry.

- ☐ Clear and declutter each room first, so dusting and wiping are unobstructed.
- ☐ Dust high to low: ceiling fans, light fixtures, shelves and the tops of cabinets.
- ☐ Deep clean the carpets, area rugs and upholstery while the weather still lets them dry.
- ☐ Wash the windows and the window coverings while the air is still mild.
- ☐ Rotate the seasonal things: summer clothes, fans and patio gear away, winter items out.
- ☐ Store the seasonal items clean, so stains and odours do not set over months.

Entryways and the exterior

Salt and grit that never get in do not have to be cleaned out later.

- ☐ Put the winter mats down early, inside and out, at every door that is used.
- ☐ Set up a boot tray and somewhere for wet coats near the door.
- ☐ Clean the entry floor and baseboards before the season starts, not after.
- ☐ Sweep the walkway and the steps, and clear the gutters and downspouts.
- ☐ Check the weather stripping and door seals at the entrances.
- ☐ Plan how the mats will be washed through the season, not just placed once.

Kitchen and bathroom

The two rooms that carry the winter, when the windows stay shut.

- ☐ Deep clean the oven, the cooktop and the range hood filter.
- ☐ Clean inside the fridge and behind it, and check the door seals.
- ☐ Descale the taps and the shower head, and clean the grout.
- ☐ Clean the exhaust fans and the vents in both rooms, so damp air can leave.
- ☐ Let the products sit for their dwell time rather than wiping straight through.
- ☐ Check for damp corners and mildew now, while they are still small.

Safety checks while the ladder is out

The heating season is the wrong time to discover any of these.

TASK	DONE	DATE
Test the smoke detectors and replace the batteries.		
Test the carbon monoxide detectors.		
Check the fire extinguisher's date and gauge.		
Change the furnace filter.		
Book the furnace tune-up before the first real cold snap.		
Check that the vents and returns are clear and unblocked.		

Mistakes worth avoiding

The same handful, every autumn.

- ☐ Trying to clean the whole house in one day, which ends in skipped rooms.
- ☐ Cleaning from the floor up, so dust lands on finished surfaces.
- ☐ Storing seasonal items dirty and finding them stained in spring.
- ☐ Forgetting the high surfaces, the vents, under the bed and behind the appliances.
- ☐ Leaving the furnace filter until the heating season has already started.
- ☐ Using too much product, which leaves a residue that attracts more dust.
- ☐ Neglecting the entryways, so salt and grit grind into the floors all winter.