

**TORONTO SUN** NEW HOMES & CONDOS

# Getting winter-ready inside and out



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Although we're still enjoying that last blast of August-like weather you can get this time of year and a few more gasps of warm winds, like every year at this time, we are slowly winding down to winter.

Some Canadians greet the coming winter with delight — skiers, and my running group who find hot days too hard for running — while the rest of us reluctantly accept what is inevitably ahead.

## On the outside

At least it's still warm enough to prepare the exterior of our house. As the winter weather heralds in a variety of indoor entertaining, holidays and family activities this is a good time to prepare, update, clean or purge before

we settle in for those cold and blowy days.

This is the best time to check both the roof and the windows. Take a close look to see if any roof shingles are loose, not sitting flat or are worn.

This could be an indication that the roof needs a professional review to prevent any leaking through the winter and spring thaw.

Check all windows to make sure there are no gaps or cracks. If you can slip a thick business card through a gap, its time to re-apply caulking.

While performing an exterior review, check that weather stripping is still in place and that all eaves are attached firmly to the house and free of leaves.

Ice dams from the previous

year can push the eaves away from the structure allowing water to fall straight down. This can eventually lead to leaks in the basement.

If you live in a condo and think this doesn't apply to you, think again! If you have any balcony items, be sure to remove them or wrap them so that harsh winter gales won't blow things off your balcony. Carefully wrap furniture and tie it down or store until next spring.

## Inside the house

New, inexpensive interior winter mats for the front and back doors go a long way to preserve entry floors and coral leaves, salt, water and that cold wet stuff we tend to bring in with us.

It is also a good time to bring out the boot mat and determine where winter boots can be placed when covered in salt and snow. A hard plastic boot tray is a good investment.

While you're at it, it doesn't hurt to reorganize the closet so that all gloves, hats, coats etc are near the front and easy to access.

Many clients swap out their



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wardrobes from summer to winter but don't always work on the front foyer or mud-room closets. Moving winter gear to the front can save time and aggravation later.

If your space always feels cold, think about investing in an electric fireplace. There are well-priced, conveniently-sized units that plug into a regular receptacle and can contribute a lot of local heat to a room.

Lots of fireplace shops offer electric alternatives but take a look at [www.napoleon.com](http://www.napoleon.com) or [www.dimplex.com](http://www.dimplex.com) as they both have a wonderful selection.

We naturally turn indoors as the days become shorter and with that lighting becomes more important. If you haven't tried out new LED bulbs, this is a good time to do so.

They decrease energy consumption and come in the brightness most of us are used to with halogen bulbs. Adding a timer to lights can also be useful to include at this time of year to save electricity use.

As you know this is the season for family and friends, so take a look at furniture pieces and invest in new seating if necessary so you are ready for parties and get-togethers.

Most furniture manufacturers take upwards of six to eight weeks to produce custom furniture pieces so its best to put these orders in now so

you will have them when you need them!

Get prepared for the winter now because as Canadians we know its coming so why not enjoy that first snowfall knowing your home is winter-ready.

— Award-winning designer, TV personality, author and spokesperson Jane Lockhart is one of Canada's leading experts in the world of design and colour. Visit [www.janelockhart.com](http://www.janelockhart.com).



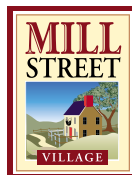
Enjoy the first snowfall knowing your home is warm and cozy.



This is the season for family and friends so invest in new furniture pieces if necessary.



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