



SEASONAL CABIN OPENING & CLOSING CHECKLIST

Opening the Cabin

Quick visual checks only; cleaning, repairs and winterization take additional time.

OUTSIDE & GROUNDS

- ☐ Walk property for fallen limbs, roof/siding damage, loose flashing and pest entry.
- ☐ Clear gutters, downspouts, drains and basement window wells.
- ☐ Inspect foundation grading for spring erosion, settlement and pooling water.
- ☐ Confirm downspouts discharge well away from the foundation.
- ☐ Inspect decks, stairs, railings and entryways before use.

WATER & INTERIOR

- ☐ Inspect visible pipes, fittings, water heater and appliances before restoring water.
- ☐ Close winter drain points; restore water slowly and check every fixture for leaks.
- ☐ Check frost-free exterior faucets and the interior wall for split-pipe leaks.
- ☐ Follow instructions to restore power; never energize an empty electric water heater.
- ☐ Check for dampness, pests and musty odors; test smoke and CO alarms.
- ☐ Remove approved AC cover and follow restart instructions.

AVOID THIS COMMON MISTAKE

Do not assume a faucet survived winter because it is frost-free. A split may only leak when water is turned back on.

THINGS THAT NEED ATTENTION

Safety: Follow manufacturer guidance; use qualified professionals for electrical, gas, roofing, structural or unsafe work.



SEASONAL CABIN OPENING & CLOSING CHECKLIST

Caring for the Cabin

Check conditions during visits and before leaving.

BUILDING & SYSTEMS

- ☐ Look under sinks, around toilets and near the water heater for drips or corrosion.
- ☐ Check basement, crawlspace and windows for moisture or condensation.
- ☐ Inspect decks, railings, steps and attachment to the building for decay.
- ☐ Check door/window seals, roof drainage and exterior penetrations.
- ☐ Keep vents and HVAC equipment clear; follow filter maintenance instructions.
- ☐ Look for rodents, insects and gaps around utility penetrations.

BEFORE EVERY DEPARTURE

- ☐ Remove perishables and trash; secure windows and doors.
- ☐ Confirm faucets, toilets and appliances are not leaking.
- ☐ Follow your water shutoff, thermostat, security and ventilation plan.
- ☐ Leave emergency contact details and access arrangements with a trusted person.

AVOID THIS COMMON MISTAKE

Do not leave an unplugged refrigerator tightly closed. Empty, clean and dry it, then leave the door ajar to discourage odors and mold.

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Closing & Winterizing

Inspection time only; full winterization takes longer.

GROUND & DRAINAGE

- ☐ Recheck grading for soil erosion, compaction/settlement and drainage toward foundation.
- ☐ Clean gutters, window wells and downspouts; extend discharge away from building.
- ☐ Disconnect hoses, drain exterior faucets and shut off relevant outdoor lines.
- ☐ Clean wet leaves and road salt from garage thresholds and wood jambs.
- ☐ Elevate stored items; mobile racks with properly rated locking casters ease cleaning.

WATER, HEAT & SECURITY

- ☐ Choose a complete winterization plan for heated versus unheated cabins.
- ☐ Drain/protect fixtures, traps, pumps, appliances and water heater per instructions.
- ☐ Inspect and test pipe heat tape; replace damaged or aging cable as directed.
- ☐ For heated cabins, verify heat, alarms and a remote temperature alert plan.
- ☐ Inspect weatherstripping, pests and heating vents; secure loose outdoor items.
- ☐ Cover outdoor AC only if approved; never disable a winter-use heat pump.

AVOID THIS COMMON MISTAKE

Shutting off the main water valve is not full winterization. Water left in pipes, toilets, traps or appliances can freeze and burst.

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Checking the Cabin

Arrange periodic checks, especially after storms.

EXTERIOR & WEATHER

- ☐ Check for roof damage, ice dams and unusual snow buildup from a safe place.
- ☐ Clear snow from heating combustion-air intakes and exhaust vents.
- ☐ Look for fallen trees, broken windows, door damage and blocked access.
- ☐ Watch for snowmelt pooling or ice forming against the foundation.
- ☐ Keep snow piles off wood siding, garage jambs and exterior door frames.

SYSTEMS & READINESS

- ☐ For heated cabins, confirm power, heat and appropriate thermostat settings.
- ☐ Look for leaks, frost, dampness, unusual odors and signs of rodents.
- ☐ Review temperature, leak and security alerts; arrange a local check when needed.
- ☐ After power loss, check for frozen plumbing before restoring water.
- ☐ Keep local caretaker and service-provider contact information current.
- ☐ Record damage and repairs; avoid entering unsafe buildings.

AVOID THIS COMMON MISTAKE

Do not rely on heat tape or a thermostat alone during an outage. Heat cable needs power, and remote alerts do not replace on-site checks.

THINGS THAT NEED ATTENTION

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