

# Roofs, Windows, Doors, Oh My!

Wintry weather can be hard on our homes. Snow, sleet, ice or even just plunging temps and raging winds can tear at the most vulnerable parts of our houses. Keep reading for how to keep yourself and your house safe.

## ROOFS

Snowfall and ice accumulation can add huge amounts of weight to your roof. In addition, heat from the house can melt ice and snow that can refreeze and create ice dams along roofs, gutters and downspouts. The water then moves under the roof and into the walls or through flashings, which weren't designed for this kind of abuse. Not only is it dangerous for you to get up on an ice-slick roof to remove snow and ice, using a regular shovel can damage shingles. Call a contractor for an evaluation before the snow arrives and set up a plan for dealing with excessive ice and snow.

## WINDOWS

Those lovely glass panes



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that let in light also can let an awful lot of heat out. Here are some tips for winterizing your windows from Bob Vila.

- Check all the weatherstripping around the windows for leaks and replace if necessary. This is a pretty easy job that

you may be able to do yourself.

- Replace window screens with storm windows, if needed in your area.

- Check for drafts around windows and doors and caulk inside and out to keep heat in.

- Inspect your windows. Look for cracks, broken glass, gaps and rotten windows. Repair panes and wood that need it. This may be a job for a pro, depending upon how handy you are. You don't want your repair to fail on a

10-degree day.

## DOORS

Your front door is often the first thing people see when they come to your home. It's also one of the first things to get hit by brutal winter weather. Just like with the windows, check the weatherstripping and any glass panes. If you've got a screen door in warmer weather, replace it with a storm door for the cold winter months. A storm door provides another valuable layer of insulation and many models have a sweep, which prevents drafts from coming in.

Also make sure your front and back doors swing open and closed freely without sticking or shoving. Fluctuating temperatures can cause wooden doors and jambs to expand and contract, causing doors and openings to change their shape. This warp creates gaps for cold air to invade your warm, snug house, and also can loosen hinges and let in water, ice and snow.

Don't forget your garage door. A well-insulated garage door will not only protect the garage and the things in it, but also can keep the rooms adjoining it warmer. A big opening like the garage is also a big generator of wind noise, and a properly insulated door can cut down on it.



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### REAL ESTATE 101



### Shop for Quality

Look to the property disclosure for important information about the roof, windows and doors on your home. The seller should list any problems, repairs and maintenance done. A thorough disclosure will include exact dates and contractor names, but the form varies from state to state. Don't be afraid to ask your agent for more information.

### HOMEWISE GLOSSARY

**Subject to:** the recognition by a buyer of conditions (such as a prior loan), which are not the buyer's legal responsibility.  
SOURCE: MLS.com

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