

# Simple, Sustainable, and Warm

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Keep warm this winter without breaking the budget by following some simple do-it-yourself home winterization tips.

- Clean out your gutters. Once all of the leaves have fallen, make sure that your gutters are clean and clear and downspouts are pointing away from your home's foundation. Clogged gutters can lead to water leaking into your home.
- Check for leaky windows and doors. Use a piece of tissue or a stick of incense to find drafts. Plug leaks around the base of windows and doors with an old fashioned draft protector that you can make yourself. Sew a tube out of scrap fabric and fill it with rice or beans. If you don't sew, use old socks, tights, or even the legs from an old pair of sweat pants. Fill them partially full and tie off any open ends.
- Make sure to clean and inspect your ducts. Ducts should be vacuumed every few years to clear them of dust and debris. Replace or at least vacuum out your air filters as well. A properly maintained heating system can save you money and keep your home warmer.
- Reverse your ceiling fan. Hot air rises. Reversing the direction of your ceiling fans so that they circulate air downward is a simple way to stay warmer.

- Close the vents and the doors to any rooms you don't use. Keep closet and storage room doors closed. There's no reason to use energy to heat rooms that you're not using. Make sure that the vents in the rooms you do use are not blocked by furniture and are clean and clear of debris.
- Open the curtains on the south side of your home during the day to let in the sunlight. Make sure to close them before night fall to keep the heat in.
- Leave the oven door cracked open after baking. Make sure the oven is off, but let that leftover heat out into your kitchen to help warm your space.
- Dress in layers, and make sure to wear warm socks. Staying bundled up will help you resist the temptation to turn the thermostat up.

If you have the extra money to spend, consider replacing old windows and appliances with more efficient ones as well as adding insulation to your home to help reduce your energy costs and stay warm this winter.

