



Prepare for Extreme Winter Weather

Although winter comes as no surprise, many of us are not ready for its arrival. If you are prepared for the hazards of winter, you will be more likely to stay safe and healthy when temperatures start to fall.

Many people prefer to remain indoors during winter, but staying inside is no guarantee of safety. Take these steps to keep your home safe and warm during the winter months.

Winterize your home. In addition to keeping your utility bills lower, avoiding a winter household emergency means avoiding risk of injury when addressing those issues.

- Install weather stripping, insulation, and storm windows.
- Insulate water lines that run along exterior walls.
- Clean out gutters and repair roof leaks.

Check your heating systems. Make an annual date to get your home up to date for the winter—Daylight Savings Time is always a good reminder.

- Have your heating system serviced professionally to make sure that it is clean, working properly, and ventilated to the outside.
- Inspect and clean fireplaces and chimneys.
- Install a smoke detector. Test batteries monthly and replace them twice a year.
- Have a safe alternate heating source and alternate fuels available.
- Prevent carbon monoxide (CO) emergencies.
 - Install a CO detector to alert you of the presence of the deadly, odorless, colorless gas. Check batteries when you change your clocks in the fall and spring.

- Learn symptoms of CO poisoning: headache, dizziness, weakness, upset stomach, vomiting, chest pain, and confusion.

Stock food that needs no cooking or refrigeration and keep water stored in clean containers.

Keep an up-to-date emergency kit, including:

- Battery-operated devices, such as a flashlight, a Weather Radio, and lamps;
- extra batteries;
- first-aid kit and extra medicine;
- baby items; and
- cat litter or sand for icy walkways.

It's equally important to keep yourself safe and comfortable while driving in winter. **Get your car ready for cold weather use before winter arrives.**

- Service the radiator and maintain antifreeze level; check tire tread or, if necessary, replace tires with all-weather or snow tires.
- Keep gas tank full to avoid ice in the tank and fuel lines, and in case you experience travel delays in bad weather.
- Prepare a winter emergency kit to keep in your car in case you become stranded. The kit should include:
 - cell phone, portable charger, and extra batteries;
 - blankets;
 - food and water;
 - booster cables, flares, tire pump, and a bag of sand or cat litter (for traction);
 - flashlight, battery-powered radio, and extra batteries;
 - first-aid kit; and
 - plastic bags (for sanitation).

Adapted from [CDC](#)



Holiday Toy Safety

When purchasing and assembling toys this holiday season, follow a few age and safety guidelines to make sure they're safe and age-appropriate for the child.

- Avoid small balls and toys with small parts for children under age 3.
- Keep deflated balloons away from children younger than 8 years old and discard broken balloons immediately.
- Get the right size helmets and other safety gear for bikes, scooters, skateboards, and skates. Ensure they're worn properly and that younger children are supervised at all times when using these items.
- Keep kids under 14 away from high-powered magnets due to risk of swallowing. Regular magnets in building and play sets should also be treated with caution for small children.
- Check for recalls. Despite manufacturers' and government agencies' best efforts, sometimes products can be proven unsafe after they've already been sold. The Consumer Product Safety Commission ([CPSC.gov](#)) keeps records of toy recalls in the U.S.

Adapted from [Consumer Reports](#) & [CPSC](#)

Keep Warm and Dry When its Cold Outside

Many people spend time outdoors in the winter working, traveling, or enjoying winter sports. Outdoor activities can expose you to several safety hazards, but you can prepare for them by wearing layers of warm clothing, sprinkling cat litter or sand on icy patches, and following safety precautions outdoors.

In addition to taking precautions to prevent cold-weather health problems, it's important to recognize their onset in yourself and others.

Hypothermia

Symptoms: shivering, exhaustion, confusion, fumbling hands, memory loss, slurred speech, drowsiness

Treatment: If you notice any of the above signs, take the person's temperature. If it is below 95° F, the situation is an emergency—get medical attention immediately. If medical care is not available, begin warming the person, as follows:

- Get the victim into a warm room or shelter.
- If the victim has on any wet clothing, remove it.
- Warm the center of the body first—chest, neck, head, and groin—using an electric blanket, if available. You can also use skin-to-skin contact under loose, dry layers of blankets, clothing, towels, or sheets.
- Warm beverages can help increase body temperature, but do not give alcoholic beverages. Do not try to give beverages to an unconscious person.



- After body temperature has increased, keep the person dry and wrapped in a warm blanket, including the head and neck.
- Get medical attention as soon as possible.

Frostbite

Symptoms: At the first signs of redness or pain in any skin area, get out of the cold or protect any exposed skin—frostbite may be beginning. Skin that is white or grayish-yellow, feels unusually firm or waxy, or is numb may be subject to frostbite. A victim is often unaware of frostbite until someone else points it out because the frozen tissues are numb.

Treatment: If (1) there is frostbite but no sign of hypothermia and (2) immediate medical care is not available, proceed as follows:

- Get into a warm room as soon as possible.
- Unless absolutely necessary, do not walk on frostbitten feet or toes—this increases the damage.
- Immerse the affected area in warm—not hot—water (the temperature should be comfortable to the touch for unaffected parts of the body).
- Or, warm the affected area using body heat. For example, the heat of an armpit can be used to warm frostbitten fingers.
- Do not rub the frostbitten area with snow or massage it at all. This can cause more damage.
- Don't use a heating pad, heat lamp, or the heat of a stove, fireplace, or radiator for warming. Affected areas are numb and can be easily burned.

These procedures are not substitutes for proper medical care. Hypothermia is a medical emergency and frostbite should be evaluated by a health care provider.

No one can stop the onset of winter. However, if you follow these suggestions, you will be ready for it when it comes.

Adapted from [CDC \(1\)](#) & [CDC \(2\)](#)



Recipe of the Month:

Great-Grandma's Italian Meatballs

This recipe uses half ground beef and half ground turkey, but you won't miss the extra calories.

Ingredients

- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 3/4 cup seasoned bread crumbs
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 large eggs, lightly beaten
- 1 teaspoon each dried basil, oregano and parsley flakes
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 pound lean ground turkey
- 1 pound lean ground beef (90% lean)
- Hot cooked pasta and pasta sauce, optional

Instructions

Preheat oven to 375°. In a small skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add onion; cook and stir 3-4 minutes or until tender. Add garlic; cook 1 minute longer. Cool slightly.

In a large bowl, combine bread crumbs, cheese, eggs, seasonings and onion mixture. Mix in turkey and beef. Shape into 1-1/2-in. balls.

Place meatballs on a rack coated with cooking spray in a 15x10x1-in. baking pan. Bake 18-22 minutes or until lightly browned and cooked through. If desired, serve with pasta and pasta sauce.

Nutrition per serving (serves 8):

Calories: 271; Fat: 13g; Saturated Fat: 5g; Cholesterol: 125mg; Fiber: 1g; Carbohydrates: 10g; Protein: 27g; Sodium: 569mg; Sugars: 1g

Adapted from [Taste of Home](#)