



Get Your Roof Ready for Winter

For many American families, homeownership brings a sense of stability, accomplishment and peace of mind. Owning a home also means being responsible for its upkeep, in order to make sure it is a safe, comfortable sanctuary for your family to enjoy. As the winter months approach, the first measure of protection for a home against rain and snow in many parts of the country is the roof.

These tips offer advice to home owners for how to get your roof ready for the cold winter.

1. Start off by checking the roof framing structure to make sure it is not compromised. Visually scan the roof for any sagging or uneven areas. If you do see an area that looks uneven, this may mean damage to the roof deck below the shingles.
2. Inspect the gutter systems to make sure they are not clogged with branches, leaves, or other debris. This is important to ensure that rain water and snow have a way off of the roof. If the water or snow is left standing on the roof, there is an increased likelihood of leaking or ice damming.
3. Make sure that gutters are fastened properly and are tight and secure so that they don't cause overflow and build-up or fall off the fascia board. Leaking water can end up causing damage not just to your roof, but to your interior walls, as well.
4. Check the valleys of the roof to ensure that they are also free and clear of debris that can add weight to the roof and also act as a barrier to rain and snow. Leaks frequently occur in the valleys so make sure they are well protected by a proper roofing system.
5. One of the most common causes for roofing leaks is due to problems with flashing. Flashing is the aluminum or metal material that is used in roof to wall transitions over joints to prevent water from seeping in and causing damage. Metal flashing should also be used around roof vents, pipes, skylights, and chimneys. Remember that flashings can be loosened or torn by high winds and heavy rains, so inspect the areas annually.
6. Lastly, you should walk around to carefully inspect the shingles on the roof – look for curling edges, missing granules, and certainly for missing shingles or damage from birds, rodents, or squirrels.

By inspecting your roof at least twice a year—before the winter months begin and after they are over—you'll be able to spot and correct any potential problems before they could get severe and cause you to have to replace the entire roof before its expected lifespan. For more information about home safety, visit nahb.org/forconsumers or visit www.midshoreshomebuilders.com/members.asp for a qualified contractor.



Choosing the Right Contractor It is essential to choose the right contractor to remodel or improve your home. Hiring a professional contractor means that they have the proper credentials & insurance, background, and knowledge to finish your project professionally. Under no circumstances should a consumer pull a permit from a local government. This puts the sole risk and liability on the consumer. Visit www.midshoreshomebuilders.com/consumers.asp for a [Checklist to Finding and Hiring a Builder or Remodeler](#).