



Get winter ready

As the days get shorter and temperatures drop, it's important to prepare your home for the colder months.

Getting your home ready for winter helps keep you safe, warm, and can prevent costly repairs. Discover some simple steps you can take to look after your home during the winter months.

Heating

Radiators



Remove trapped air so radiators can heat your home more efficiently, reducing cold spots and saving energy. Visit our website to learn how to bleed a radiator and with



a short video and a written step-by-step guide:
www.nhg.org.uk/help-and-advice/how-to-bleed-a-radiator

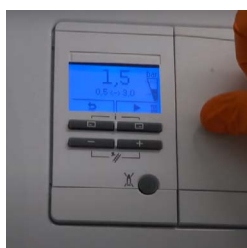
Test your heating system early

Switching it on before the cold hits gives time to spot and fix issues rather than discovering a failure in freezing weather. If you find a fault with your central heating, report it now and we can fix it before the temperatures really drop.



Heating not working? Report a repair on our website: www.nhg.org.uk/contact-us/report-a-repair

Check boiler pressure



To ensure your boiler is operating efficiently throughout the year you may need to repressurise your boiler. Low pressure can cause heating and hot water to stop working.

Topping it up early prevents breakdowns. Visit our website to learn how to repressurise your boiler with a short video and a written



step-by-step guide:
www.nhg.org.uk/help-and-advice/how-to-repressurise-a-boiler

Set heating on a timer or thermostat

Maintaining a steady background warmth is more efficient and helps prevent pipes freezing during very cold spells. The room thermostat controls the heating to maintain the temperature you have set. 18 to 21°C is the recommended range for maintaining a comfortable temperature.

The time clock or programmer automatically turns the heating and hot water on and off at times you set. During freezing spells, keep some background heat on all the time to reduce the risk of burst pipes.

Rooms



Do not place your sofa or large furniture close to your radiators as it can stop heat reaching the room.



Curtains and blinds help keep the heat in, close them as soon as it starts to get dark.

Using drought excluders at doors keeps the heat in the room.

Avoid frozen pipes

Know where the stopcock (main water shut-off valve) is

If you find that a pipe has frozen, you should turn off the water at the main stopcock. If pipes burst, shutting the water off quickly can prevent major damage.



Follow our emergency self-help steps if you discover frozen or burst pipes: www.nhg.org.uk/help-and-advice/flooding-and-leaking-pipes

Smoke and carbon monoxide alarms



It is important that you regularly check smoke and carbon monoxide alarms in your home and replace any batteries if necessary.

Your annual gas safety inspection is essential to make sure your home is gas safe and to reduce the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning.



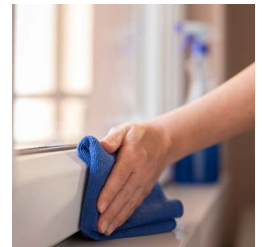
How to test a smoke alarm and replace a battery: www.nhg.org.uk/help-and-advice/how-to-replace-a-smoke-alarm-battery

Prevent damp and mould

Experts agree that with proper ventilation, insulation and heating, condensation can be avoided or reduced.

Here are some tips on how to do this.

- Keep vents and extractor fans clear. Good airflow reduces condensation.
- Wipe away condensation on windows and sills to stop damp building up.
- Open windows when cooking.



- Keep a low, steady background heat in winter.
- Avoid pushing furniture such as beds, sofas and wardrobes tightly against outside walls. Leave a small gap so air can move, and moisture doesn't get trapped behind.
- If drying indoors, place clothes on a rack near a window that's open slightly, or in a room with an extractor fan running.
- Use pan lids when cooking
- Keep bathroom doors shut during and after bathing and showering.
- Wipe down tiles and surfaces after showers and baths.
- Avoid overfilling cupboards and wardrobes.
- Check trickle vents are open if windows have them.
- Report leaks or repairs promptly.



Damp and mould help



Find lots of useful information and advice on our damp and mould section: www.nhg.org.uk/help-and-advice/damp-and-mould