

Checklist for Snowbirds

Leaving Summer Home

Winterize

- Shut off water at main valve.
- Turn off water heater.
- Service HVAC so it works when you return.
- Lower thermostat to at least 55°F (13°C) (don't turn it off; it could freeze).
- Unplug appliances.
- Open doors to dishwasher, washing machine to prevent mold.
- Close fireplace flue.
- Cover chimney with wire mesh to exclude critters.
- Leave interior doors open to allow air circulation.
- Clean outdoor furniture and move it inside for storage.

Administrative

- Forward mail or arrange to have someone collect it.
- Hire plant and pet care.
- Put utilities the house won't use, such as cable and internet, on hold.
- Stop all deliveries (water, newspaper, etc.).
- If you have a landline, forward your calls to cellphone or landline in winter home.
- Contact your bank and credit cards to let them know you'll be living in a new location for x amount of time.
- Change your mailing address with financial institutions, insurance, and other places that send you mail.
- Talk to your home insurance provider about how to proceed with your policy while you're away.
- Transfer your prescriptions.

Security

- Double check to make sure all doors and windows are locked.
- Let neighbors know your travel plans.
- Fill out a form at the police department for your travel plans.
- Arrange for a way for lights to turn on and off such as smart lights, timers, or apps.

- Arrange to have someone check on your home, shovel walks, make sure HVAC is working, check for roof leaks, etc.
- Set your security system.
- Use smart home monitoring to monitor things like lighting, temperature in the house, security, etc.

Cleaning

- Do all laundry, dry, fold it, and put it away.
- Clean house thoroughly from top to bottom.
- Clean out fridge and freezer and if empty, dry, shut off, and leave the doors open to prevent buildup of mold and mildew.
- Remove any opened foods from cupboards or safely seal them in zipper bags.
- Empty garbage and wash garbage cans.

Packing

- Medications and toiletries
- Travel documents
- Important paperwork such as tax documents and prescriptions
- Health care records
- Identification and passports
- Anything you share between homes such as linens, clothing, etc.

Vehicle

- Have car and/or RV serviced.
- Check tire pressure.
- Make sure you have vehicle registration with you.

Arriving at Winter Home

- Have HVAC inspected and change filter.
- Remove plastic wrap from sinks, toilets, and tubs.
- Turn on water if you had it shut off.
- Turn on water heater.
- Un-pause utility bills.
- Plug in appliances.

- Check interior and exterior of home for signs of damage and arrange to have anything fixed.
- Replace batteries and bulbs.
- Test smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors.
- Clean to refresh.
- Let neighbors or people watching your home know you have arrived.
- Plug in appliances.
- Turn on fridge and freezer and allow it to chill before adding food.
- Get groceries.
- If you keep a vehicle at your winter home, have it inspected and serviced.
- Put out outdoor furniture.
- Clean up landscaping.
- Push furniture back into their proper places.
- Wipe down surfaces, cupboard and fridge shelves, dust, and dust mop.
- Check dates on any food and medications there when you arrive and discard if expired.

Leaving Winter Home

- Shut off water at main valve.
- Turn off water heater.
- Service HVAC so it works when you return.
- Turn up a/c thermostat to about 85°F (29°C).
- Unplug appliances.
- Open doors to dishwasher, washing machine.
- Leave interior doors open.
- Close blinds or shades.
- Prevent sewer gas accumulation by covering toilets, sinks, and tubs by covering them with plastic wrap.
- Push furniture away from walls so mold can't accumulate.

Security

- Double check to make sure all doors and windows are locked.
- Hire plant and pet care while away.
- Let neighbors, community managers, and law enforcement know your travel plans.
- Arrange for a way for lights to turn on and off (security) such as smart lights.

- Arrange to have someone check on your home to make sure everything is okay.
- Set your security system.
- Use smart home monitoring to monitor things like lighting, temperature in the house, security, etc.

Administrative

- Forward mail or have someone collect it.
- Stop all deliveries (water, newspaper, etc.).
- If you have a landline, forward your calls to cellphone or landline in summer home.
- Contact your bank and credit cards to let them know you'll be living in a new location for x amount of time.
- Change your mailing address with financial institutions, insurance, and other places that send you mail.
- Talk to your home insurance provider about how to proceed with your policy while you're away.
- Transfer your prescriptions.

Cleaning

- Do all laundry, dry, fold, put away.
- Clean house from top to bottom.
- Clean and put away outdoor furniture.
- Clean out fridge and freezer and if empty, dry, shut off, and leave the doors open.
- Remove any opened foods from cupboards or safely seal them in zipper bags.
- Empty garbage and wash garbage cans/waste baskets.

Packing

- Travel documents
- Prescription medications and toiletries
- Important paperwork such as tax documents
- Health care records
- Identification and passports
- Anything you share between homes such as linens, clothing, etc.

Vehicle/RV

- Have car serviced.
- Check tire pressure.
- Make sure you have vehicle registration with you.

Returning to Your Summer Home

- Turn on water; check for leaks.
- Let everyone know you've returned including neighbors and police.
- Stop mail forwarding.
- Resume utility services you may have put on hold, such as cable or internet.
- Re-set up deliveries.
- Turn up HVAC and change the filter.
- Turn on water heater..
- Plug in appliances and close doors.
- Test smoke and Co2 detectors and replace batteries.
- Wipe down surfaces, dust, wipe out fridge, and dust mop.
- Grocery shop.
- Clean up landscaping.
- Do a quick indoor and outdoor walk-through to check for leaks or other issues that arose during the winter.
- Open fireplace flue and uncover chimney.
- Check expiration dates on medications and foods and discard if expired.