

Winterizing Your Cat

By Wendy Diamond

There's always a lot to do before the cold weather arrives. The shorts and sandals get packed away, while the goose-down jackets and snow boots come out. We're prepared, but have we prepared our pets—especially our feline friends?

Following are tips on how you can *winterize* your cat!

1. **Protect cats from toxins.**

The car may need antifreeze to run in the winter, but your cat doesn't, so be sure to keep antifreeze on a high shelf since it's toxic to cats.¹ Other common winter items—such as mistletoe, poinsettias and holly, in addition to flu and cold medicine, and even rising yeast dough for those holiday cakes—can be moderately to highly toxic to pets, so keep them out of reach, too.^{2,3}

2. **Continue your flea-prevention regimen.**

The risk of fleas doesn't disappear when the weather gets colder. In fact, fleas on cats can survive for up to 10 days at temperatures lower than 40 degrees Fahrenheit⁴—that's cold! There may also be fleas living in your warm home.⁵ Help protect your cat with a flea preventive once-a-month, 12-months-a-year, including winter. Bayer's Advantage® II for cats kills through contact, so even winter fleas don't have to bite your cat to die.

3. **Kitty, it's cold outside, so keep the cat in!**

Cats that roam outdoors in the winter can get lost, develop infectious diseases from other outdoor pets and wildlife or even freeze.¹ Also look out for salt-treated sidewalks that can dry and crack paw pads.⁶ And remember, if you're outside and you feel cold, your cat is probably feeling cold, too—so keep your feline indoors!

4. **Kitty's hungry!**

Like people, cats spend more energy in the winter trying to keep warm, so keep the water dish full and consider feeding her a little extra chow.⁶

5. **Roast marshmallows, not your cat!**

Fireplaces are great for keeping your house warm in the winter, but your cats can be looking for a place to warm their paws too. Make sure to screen your fireplace so cats can't get too close. Hot cinders and sparks can be a hazard for your kitty. The same goes for wood-burning stoves and space heaters.⁷

Following these simple steps will help keep you and your pet safe and warm during the winter season!

Wendy Diamond, one of America's foremost pet lifestyle experts, has teamed up with Bayer's Advantage® II for cats to put the kibosh on common cat myths. For more information visit: www.CatMythBusters.com.

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