Going away for the holidays? Prep your house with these 9 tips.



There’s no place like home for the holidays. But if you’re traveling this season, make sure your home is safe and protected in your absence. Our nine safety tips will help you prep your house for holiday travel so you can enjoy a merrier holiday season.

1. **Unplug electronics.** To reduce the risk of electrical fires and lower your energy bills while you’re away, unplug nonessential electronics and appliances. This also safeguards your devices from power surges or lightning strikes.

2. **Choose the right temperature.** Help prevent frozen pipes by setting your thermostat to a minimum of 55°F. This stops pipes from freezing and bursting, which can lead to costly damage. Opening cabinet doors in the kitchen and bathroom also helps warm air circulate around the plumbing on exterior walls, reducing the risk of freezing.

3. **Set up timed lights and appliances.** Creating the illusion that someone is home can help deter burglars. Use timers to turn lights on in the evening or throughout the day to mimic your daily routine. Lights turning on and off and the occasional sound of a television or radio can make your home seem occupied even when it’s not.

4. **Lock all doors and windows.** Before leaving, ensure all doors, windows, and entry points are securely locked. It’s a simple but effective way to prevent unauthorized entry.

5. **Hide valuables from view.** Don’t leave valuable items on display to potential burglars. Use a safe or a concealed storage box for jewelry, small electronics, and important documents. Block windows with curtains or blinds to keep your possessions out of sight. Walk around the exterior of your home and look in to see what burglars could see, too.

6. **Stop your mail or arrange for pickups.** A pile of mail or packages on your doorstep can be a clear sign no one is home. If you're leaving for a longer holiday trip, consider pausing your mail with the postal service. Or, request a neighbor, friend, or professional service to collect your mail and packages while you're away to maintain the appearance of an occupied home.

7. **Watch the weather.** If snow or ice storms come through while you're gone, don't let your property become a hazard to neighbors. Arrange for a service or trusted friend to spread salt, clear the sidewalk for people walking by, and plow your driveway. It's your responsibility to keep your property hazard-free, even when you're away.

8. **Install and monitor security cameras.** A great way to boost home security is by placing security cameras near your home's entry points and vulnerable areas. Choose models with motion sensors and put them in spots that are visible to potential intruders. While you're away, check the footage regularly to keep an eye on your property.

9. **Have someone stop in.** Consider having a trusted family member or neighbor check in on your property during holiday travels. They can look for any issues, confirm your heating and security systems are functioning, collect mail and packages, and address any immediate concerns. A simple check-in can provide peace of mind and reduce the risk of significant damage.

You've prepped your house for holiday travel, but are you looking for more protection throughout the year? Our comprehensive home insurance policies build coverage and peace of mind. Talk to a local, independent agent about one today.