



RV Winterizing Checklist



DISCLAIMER

All RV's are different and have different components, please consult your RV and appliance user's manuals on your specific equipment.

Winterizing your RV is easy to do yourself and after an initial investment in some basic tools is inexpensive and shouldn't take long at all, let's get started!

- Turn off power to water heater & allow sufficient time to pass for water in tank to cool to ambient temperature OR run a hot water faucet in the rig until all the heater water has been used up.
 - Turn off water hear propane
 - Turn off water heater electric
- Dump, flush, clean & close waste tanks
- Locate & open freshwater tank drain valve and allow tank to drain completely – move onto next step as it drains
- Disconnect from city water & make sure 12v water pump is turned off
- Release pressure in plumbing lines by opening any faucet or low point drain – capture in a bucket if no longer connected to sewer dump
- Open low point drains and allow water to drain (install ball valves if not already installed)
- Open every faucet, shower, & port in the RV both hot and cold sides – as they open air is allowed to enter the lines breaking any vacuum and allowing gravity to pull the water out the low point drains
- Remove any in-line water filters attached to your RV – reinstall any mounted housings
- Verify freshwater tank is done draining, if it is briefly turn on the 12v pump to purge the water inside, allowing it to drain out low points (WARNING: running the pump dry for too long can damage it – only do this for a second or two!)
- Drain water heater tank
 - Open cover and release temperature & pressure valve at top (make sure water inside is COOL) - you might hear more water drain out the low point drain
 - Remove the drain plug or anode rod with socket and long extension or a water heater specific wrench
- At this point:
 - Hot Faucets: OPEN
 - Cold Faucets: OPEN
 - Low Point Drains: OPEN
 - Water heater pressure release valve: OPEN
 - Water heater drain plug or anode rod: OPEN
- Bypass water heater – refer to your specific user manual





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- 2 valve system: Turn both valves parallel to the water lines -flow is directed past the valves through the bypass
- 3 valve system: Coff the cold & hot side valves AND open the bypass valve in the middle
- Water management panel: Set to winterize mode
- Flush the now isolate water heater tank with a flush to clean out all the silt and mineral deposits that have accumulated at the bottom
- After cleaning out the tank close the pressure release valve at the top
 - Some folks choose to leave the drain plug or anode rod out so that the tank can air dry, others choose to screw it in a few threads but not seal it, and still others leave the plug out completely but stuff a paper towel in the hole to allow airflow while discouraging insects from entering
- Washing machine, refrigerator with an ice maker, dishwasher or any additional components that hook up to your RV plumbing: reference individual user manuals for instructions on how to isolate and drain their plumbing or steps to otherwise include them in this winterizing process
- Close all the faucets while leaving the low point drains open
- Blow out water lines using air compressor adapter – quick connect or Schrader style (BONUS- insert your water pressure regulator between the adapter and the city water inlet as an added layer of protection)
- Set air compressor to 30-40psi (if capable) – reference component user manuals for max psi ratings
- Water management panel: (refer to your specific model manual for detailed instructions) generally knobs will be set at 45* angles for air blow out
 - Now seeing as these 45* angles are a mixture of the *tank fill* and *winterize* settings, many people will do the next blow out step first on the *tank fill* setting in order to drain water between the panel and the fresh tank, and then switch over to the *winterize* setting and blow out the rest of the lines
 - Skip if you do not have a water management panel
- Turn on the air compressor and blow out the water lines - right now our low point drains are open and our water heater is bypassed so we should be getting some water draining out the bottom of the RV
- After the water has stopped sputtering out of the low point drains close them to redirect the pressure for our next step
 - (If you're using a small air compressor that doesn't have an automatic pressure shut off - turn it off while rotating in-between the faucets - a helper can speed





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up the process so you don't have to go back and forth so much - what we want to avoid is having a non-pressure-regulated pump turned on with no place for the air to escape because even though the water pressure regulator we installed should protect the RV plumbing downstream, it is possible to damage the compressor or air pump lines as the compressor continues to work)

- Open all faucets - hot and cold. Grab a bucket to catch any expelled water if you're no longer hooked up to sewer – don't forget toilet, shower head and outdoor spray ports
 - Tankless or on-demand water heater: reference your user's manual on the winterizing procedure
- Once all the lines are blown out and are expelling only air, turn off the air compressor
- Move the blow out valve adapter over to your black tank flush inlet and blow that out as well
- Turn off the air compressor and disconnect the blow out adapter. If you have a water management panel and have the knobs set at 45* angles, now is time to set it fully into the *winterize* mode
- Adding RV antifreeze: make sure all of the faucets, low point drains and waste tank valves are now closed – even if you are connected to sewer
- Locate 12v water pump
 - Remove the inlet hose from the 12v pump and clean out the screen filter - attach the valve and hose to the inlet side of the pump and place the short length of hose into your RV antifreeze, either into the jug directly or pour the antifreeze into a bucket so you don't have to swap them out during the process
 - If you have a water management panel you should be able to connect a short length of hose directly into the city water inlet and place the other end into the RV antifreeze to pump it through the plumbing harness this way.
- Turn on 12v water pump
- Open faucets one at a time, both hot and until a steady stream of RV antifreeze flows out - Don't forget to pump through the toilet, shower head, outdoor spray ports and low point drains. Catch any antifreeze that doesn't flow into a drain (low point drains) with a bucket and dump it down a sink
- Once each faucet has RV antifreeze through hot & cold sides, turn off the 12v water pump and disconnect the winterizing bypass
- Pour RV antifreeze down your drains to keep each p-trap from freezing as well- I like to add enough to feel confident that the RV antifreeze reaches the pipes at the end of each waste tank - so that means adding some down the toilet too
- Close freshwater drain & sanitize tank in the spring





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- Other best practices:
 - Wipe up the sinks after flushing the faucets and also place items such as a shower head on a paper towel over the winter to catch any residual drips
 - Prop refrigerator doors open so that they can air
 - Put 12v coach batteries on a tender to keep them maintained and/or isolate them from the RV either with a disconnect switch or removing the terminals. Better yet, consider removing them from the RV and storing them in a location they will not freeze
 - Retract any unnecessary stabilizers to reduce “on-ramps” for insects & rodents
 - Pitch the entire rig slightly forward or backward to help quickly shed water out of the rain gutters
 - Remove all food and “smelly” items from your rig - black tank treatments, first aid items, personal hygiene and all cleaning supplies
 - Use the blow out adapter on all of your water hoses and winterize external accessories such as water softeners according to the manufacturer’s instructions
 - Store any equipment with gauges in a location that will not freeze i.e. adjustable water pressure regulator
 - Close all vents and external points of entry – utilize pest screens for appliance vents (refrigerator, water heater and furnace exhausts) Close your stove vent and any power cord access ports on the outside of your RV
 - Keep RV insurance policy up-to-date
 - Remove all valuables and easily pilfer-able items

The winterizing process is easy, but there are a lot of steps to consider and each RV is different. Hopefully this check list assists in your RV winterizing process so you’re ready to get out and explore come springtime!

Happy Camping,

Joshua

<https://www.rvgearandfar.com>

