KP KRISTEN PEPIN

FREE PRINTABLE CHECKLIST



The Lake Tahoe Winter Home Checklist

What I check before the first storm, whether you own here full-time, leave a second home empty or you're buying this winter.

A Lake Tahoe Winter Guide by Kristen Pepin, REALTOR®

IN THIS GUIDE

01 Roof
02 Driveway & parking
03 Early fall
04 Propane & utilities
05 If the house sits empty
06 Before a storm
07 Car kit
08 Buying in winter
09 Have fun

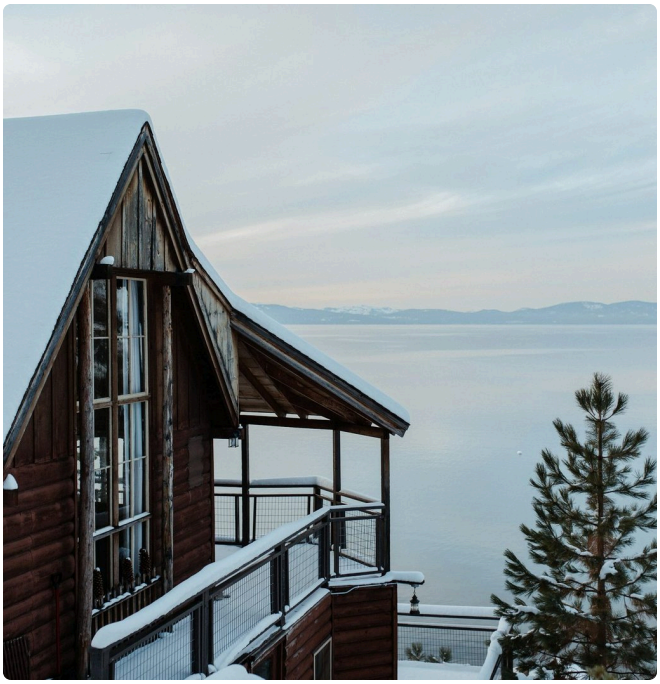
HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Work through sections 01–04 in October and November, keep 06–07 for storm days, hand section 05 to your caretaker and bring section 08 to every winter showing.

SECTION 01

01 Roof: know where the snow will go

- [ ] Know your roof: metal sheds fast and hard; composition shingles hold the weight.
- [ ] Map the fall zones: driveway, front door, hot tub, deck stairs, gas meter, propane tank.
- [ ] Add snow guards to metal roofs.
- [ ] Rope off fall zones people or pets could walk into.
- [ ] Watch for ice dams: big icicles and staining at the eaves. Heat cable is a short-term fix; attic air-sealing and insulation are the real one.
- [ ] Call an insured roof-shoveling pro if you see sagging, sticking doors or new cracks, or hear creaking.
- [ ] Clear the decks. They catch whatever slides off the roof, and older decks may not meet today's snow-load standards.
- [ ] Protect the gas meter with a cover or snow shelter.



SECTION 02

02 Driveway, access and parking

- [ ] Know your driveway: its slope and which way it faces. North-facing and shaded driveways stay icy.
- [ ] Plan where the snow goes when the berms reach 8 ft.
- [ ] Have a plan B for when the snowblower can't throw over the bank.
- [ ] Keep a shoveled path if the entry isn't covered.
- [ ] Keep furnace, water heater and dryer vents clear after every storm.
- [ ] Dig out your fire hydrant.
- [ ] Know the winter parking rules. They're all day, not just overnight:

WINTER PARKING AT A GLANCE

Truckee
No parking on Town roads or the right-of-way, Nov 1–Apr 30. Behind the snow poles isn't enough.

Placer County (Tahoe City, Kings Beach, Carnelian Bay…)
No parking on county road shoulders, Nov 1–May 1. Fines start at $150.

Incline Village & Crystal Bay
Restrictions start Oct 1: no street parking on red days. Check 775.833.5555.

Sources: Town of Truckee · Placer County · Washoe County (checked Oct 15, 2026). Rules change; confirm each season.



SECTION 03

03 Early fall: get ahead of the first storm

- [ ] Book snow removal early. Many crews fill their client lists by October. Get it in writing: driveway, berm and walkways.
- [ ] Put in snow stakes on both sides of the driveway and next to hazards: boulders, landscape lights, the water shutoff box and your nearest hydrant.
- [ ] Drain and blow out irrigation; shut off the backflow.
- [ ] Disconnect hoses and add insulated hose-bib covers.
- [ ] Store outdoor furniture and grills.
- [ ] Wrap delicate shrubs.
- [ ] Clean the gutters.
- [ ] Get the roof inspected while you can still see it.
- [ ] Service the furnace or boiler and replace the filters.
- [ ] Sweep the chimney, flue and spark arrestor.
- [ ] Test smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.
- [ ] Service the snowblower: fresh fuel, stabilizer, spare shear pins.
- [ ] Stock shovels, a roof rake, ice melt and sand.
- [ ] Put snow tires on and keep chains in the car, even with AWD.

SECTION 04

04 Propane and utilities

- [ ] Flag the propane tank with a marker taller than the deepest snow you expect.
- [ ] Keep the tank, regulator and lines clear (gently); sliding snow can shear a line.
- [ ] Know the gas shutoff. Smell gas? Get out, then call your supplier and 911 from a safe place.
- [ ] Top off the tank before storm cycles.
- [ ] Know where the main water shutoff and the electrical panel are.
- [ ] Run generators outdoors only.

SECTION 05

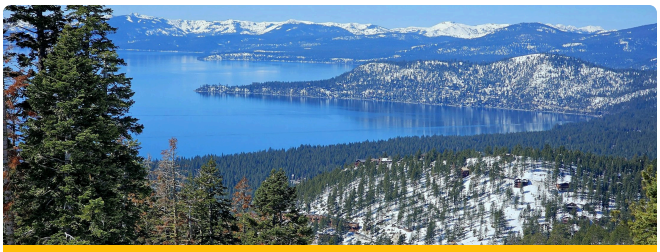
05 If the house sits empty

- [ ] Keep the heat on, no lower than 55°F (Red Cross guidance). Confirm with your insurer.
- [ ] Add freeze, leak and temperature sensors that alert your phone.
- [ ] Long absence? Shut off the water main and drain the lines.
- [ ] Open sink cabinets on exterior walls.
- [ ] Have a caretaker check inside after every storm, and know your policy's vacancy rules.
- [ ] Remove food and scented items; empty the fridge.
- [ ] Secure crawl-space doors and vents against bears: flush-fit plywood, screwed in.
- [ ] Use a bear box for trash.
- [ ] Hold the mail and give your snow crew a contact number.

SECTION 06

06 Before a storm

- [ ] Fuel the car and fill the snowblower cans.
- [ ] Buy groceries, medications and pet food before you drive up. Highway closures can stop deliveries.
- [ ] Charge phones and power banks.
- [ ] Check chain controls: Caltrans QuickMap (California) and NDOT 511 / nvroads.com (Nevada).
- [ ] Move cars off the street and out of roof-slide zones.



"Winter is the most honest time to see a Tahoe home."

— KRISTEN PEPIN, REALTOR®

SECTION 07

07 Car kit

- [ ] Pack blankets, water, snacks, a flashlight, a phone charger, a shovel, traction mats and a scraper.
- [ ] Leave no food or scented items in the car overnight. Most Tahoe bears go into torpor, but some stay active all winter.





SECTION 09

09 Have fun

Prep's done. Now go enjoy the first storm, the quiet morning after and fresh tracks. Winter is why we live here.

SECTION 08

08 Buying in winter: what to look for

- [ ] Where does the roof drop its snow?
- [ ] Is the driveway steep, north-facing or shaded?
- [ ] Is there a covered entry?
- [ ] Is there room to store snow?
- [ ] Any ice dams, staining or big icicles at the eaves?
- [ ] Is the main living space upstairs?
- [ ] Who plows the road: the county or a private road/HOA?
- [ ] Inspections are limited when things are buried. Plan your contingencies and a spring follow-up.





Thinking about buying or selling in North Lake Tahoe, Truckee, Incline Village or Crystal Bay?

Schedule a complimentary, confidential consultation, and I'll tell you what a home's winter is really like before you buy.

Call or text 203.520.8234

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General information gathered from public sources (American Red Cross; Town of Truckee; Placer and Washoe counties; Caltrans; NDOT; Tahoe Interagency Bear Team; BEAR League; FEMA) as of October 2026. Not legal, insurance, engineering or tax advice. Confirm rules with your town or county, utility, insurer, HOA and licensed contractors. Kristen is a licensed real estate agent, not a contractor, engineer or insurance agent. Not intended to solicit properties currently listed with another broker. Equal Housing Opportunity.

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