

## Winterizing Your Corvette (Posted by Matt on November 16, 2010)

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Unless you live in the deep South or Southwest, it's that time of year to put your Pride and Joy into hibernation. Putting your Corvette in the garage for a while does have some benefits: you can clean it well and check out the condition of the drivetrain. Leaving your Corvette in an unheated garage for months at a time without starting isn't terrible, but leaving your Corvette for a year or more is when really bad things happen.

The worst scenario for your Corvette is when one cold front after another pummels your garage with temperature fluctuations creating extreme condensation in internal driveline components. Engines, transmissions, and differentials corrode from the top down while the condensation drips into the lubricant. Fuel tanks have condensation dripping from the roof of the tank, corroding the steel fuel sending unit or the tank itself in 1953-1973 Corvettes.

The length of time that your Corvette sits is what really matters. Three months requires very little winterizing. Filling the fuel tank and keeping the battery charged is the extent of preparation. Planning on longer term storage? Use these guidelines:

**PAINT:** If your Corvette is going to sit for four or more months without activity, the car should be washed to safeguard against any environmental fallout like tree sap, dead bugs etc. Some of the fallout may be acidic and damage the paint or clearcoat permanently.

**TIRES & WHEELS:** Scrub the tires to remove any built up oxidation and apply a tire dressing once they are dried. Clean your wheels in a similar fashion to paint as brake dust, when left on wheels for extended periods, can permanently damage the wheel surface. Remember to use a clearcoat specific cleaner if your wheels are clearcoated.

While on the subject of tires, don't worry about flat spotting unless you have bias plies. There has been significant strides in tire composition and technology, and any flat spotting that does occur on radials will be eliminated with a nice 30 minute drive in the springtime. It is OK to keep your tires inflated to the correct pressure, and overinflating is preferred by some to reduce the tire's pliability. Just be sure to correct the pressure in the spring.

**INTERIOR:** To prevent moisture buildup and possible mold formation, use a desiccant in the footwells and rear cargo areas. DampRid is a popular choice and it is available at major retailers like Walmart.

**FUEL TANK:** The fuel tank should be filled to the top with winter fuel (available after October 1) and our part number [351005](#) fuel stabilizer should be added.

**BATTERY:** The battery should be kept charged throughout the entire time your Corvette is stored whether it's winter or summer. We recommend our Battery Tenders, parts [171251](#) or [171217](#). Simply connect the Battery Tender to your battery and it maintains the battery charge without any damage or concerns about overcharging or overheating your battery.

**FLUIDS:** Make sure to top off all fluids including coolant, brake fluid, clutch and transmission, oil and fuel. Always change your oil and filter before placing a car in long-term storage as well.

**RODENTS:** Any part of a city, suburb or rural area is open to rodent problems, and they can wreak havoc on a Corvette, particularly the plug wires. Certain brands of plug wires (including GM) consist of a vegetable based outer shell which is very appetizing to varmints. To keep them looking elsewhere for their next meal, place mothballs in the engine area. Just don't forget to remove them before starting the car. Regarding tail pipes, place face cloths over each and wrap rubber bands around them.

**CAR COVERS:** Indoors or outdoors, we recommend covering a car when it will be stored for more than a few months. The type of cover you select should be based on where the car will be stored. A weatherproof cover is a solid choice for indoors or outdoors, but a cotton cover will suffice for indoor-only storage. Corvette Central stocks a nice variety of covers that are tailored for your year and model Corvette.

**STARTING THE CAR IN WINTER:** We recommend starting your Corvette once a month throughout the winter if possible. This will help circulate the oil rather than letting it sit in the oil pan all winter, exposing cylinder walls and moving parts to possible corrosion.