

Wood Garage Door Winter Maintenance Checklist (Ottawa Edition)

In Ottawa's cold and snowy winters, wood garage doors need extra care to stay strong, beautiful, and functional. Use this checklist to protect your investment and avoid winter damage.

1. Inspect and Reseal the Surface

- Check for peeling paint, fading stain, or cracks in the finish
- Lightly sand rough spots or chipped areas
- Reapply weather-resistant exterior wood stain or paint
- Seal all exposed edges, including the bottom of the door

2. Lubricate Hinges and Moving Parts

- Apply silicone-based lubricant to hinges, rollers, tracks, and springs
- Avoid grease-based products that stiffen in cold weather

3. Check Weatherstripping and Bottom Seal

- Examine the rubber gasket at the bottom of the door for cracks or brittleness
- Replace if it no longer seals tightly
- Inspect side and top weatherstripping for drafts
- Apply weatherproof caulking to gaps or joints if needed

4. Inspect for Moisture and Rot

- Look for water stains, mold, or soft spots in the wood
- Tap gently to detect hollow-sounding or weakened areas
- Repair or replace the affected panels immediately

5. Clean the Door Surface

- Use mild soap and water with a soft cloth or sponge
- Rinse with clean water and dry thoroughly
- Avoid pressure washers - they can damage the wood fibers

6. Tighten Hardware

- Check and tighten all screws, bolts, and brackets
- Pay attention to hinges and opener arm attachments
- Replace any rusted or worn components

7. Test Balance and Opener Function

- Disconnect the opener and lift manually to check door balance
- Ensure the door lifts smoothly and stays halfway open without falling
- Verify the opener works without hesitation, noise, or strain

8. Clear Snow & Ice Build-Up

- Keep the bottom edge of the door free from snow and ice
- Use a plastic shovel - metal ones can damage the wood
- Avoid using salt directly near the wood surface

Mid-Winter Touch-Up (Optional)

- Spot-treat worn finish or reseal exposed wood
- Re-lubricate moving parts if the door becomes stiff
- Check weatherproofing again after first deep freeze