

# Winterize Your Shoes and Boots



Winter is almost upon us which means rain, snow, sleet and slush are about to begin their assault on your shoes. Fortunately, your local shoe repair shop offers several solutions to keep your footwear looking fabulous.

## Prepare Before the Storm

The best way to make sure your footwear stands up to the winter weather is to prepare before the storms come. In fact, it doesn't hurt to apply a water and stain repellent as soon as your shoes come out of the box. Just wipe the shoes with a cloth to remove any dust or debris and apply one of the several excellent fluoropolymer aerosol or pump sprays available from your local shoe repair shop.

The products are quick-drying and often ready to go in minutes. But experts recommend letting the treated shoes sit overnight for the product to completely cure. Also, make sure to use the product in an adequately-ventilated area. You will need to reapply the weatherproofer periodically. Experts recommend reapplying twice a year (prior to winter and summer). But, if you notice the water is not beading up on your shoes any longer, you may need to reapply sooner depending on the amount of wear and severity of conditions.

If your shoes have been worn, clean them with a mild cleaner and polish them. Your shoe care expert can recommend products that will work for you.

## Not Your Father's Weatherproofer

When choosing a water and stain repellent, shoe repair professionals point to new fluoropoly-

mer technology that has come on the market in recent years. These products are easy to apply, odor-free, do not attract dust and dirt and do not change the color of the shoe. They are also safe for suede and brushed leather.

Traditional products such as mink oil, silicones or neatsfoot oil also work well for specific applications. Make sure the product you choose is right for you. That's where your shoe care professional comes in.

## What Happens If I'm Too Late?

If you venture out in unprotected shoes and return with wet, salt-stained uppers, fear not. Your shoe care expert can help you restore those shoes as well.

The first thing to do if your shoes get wet is to remove excess moisture from the outside of the shoe using a dry rag or towel. To pull the moisture from the inside of the shoe, put paper towels inside the shoe to draw the moisture out. Replace them every hour or two until the shoe is dry. Do not use heat to dry your shoes as this can damage the leather.

Shoe repair shops carry salt stain removers for those pesky white stains. Apply the stain remover, let dry and repeat until the stain disappears. Then use a conditioner to restore the leather. Then apply your water and stain repellent.

And if you find you can't get water or salt stains out of your shoes, bring them to your shoe repair shop for a professional cleaning.

## Not Just for Shoes

The water and stain repellents available from your shoe repair shop are not just for shoes. In addition to protecting your footwear, they can protect other leather items such as jackets and handbags. They work on suede and cloth of all types. You can use them to protect your car interior and your furniture. Just make sure you have adequate ventilation in the area where you will be using the product.

**Insert your store information here.**



**SHOE REPAIR: It's More Than You Think**