

# PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE & STORAGE

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## *Protecting Your Corvette—The Right Way*

There comes a moment every autumn when the driving season winds down. The days grow shorter, the roads turn hostile with salt and moisture, and the time arrives to put your Corvette away until spring. How you handle this transition matters more than most owners realize.

We've spent nearly fifty years maintaining, restoring, and storing Corvettes of every generation. Through that experience, we've learned a truth that surprises many owners: Corvettes don't suffer from being driven. They suffer from being neglected while sitting.

Moisture, contaminated fluids, and small oversights during storage cause far more damage than normal driving ever will. The good news? With thoughtful preparation, nearly all of these problems are entirely preventable.

*This guide doesn't just tell you what to do—it explains why it matters, so you can store your Corvette with confidence.*

## **The Case for Driving**

Before we discuss storage, let's acknowledge the best alternative: when conditions allow, the healthiest thing you can do for your Corvette is drive it. A monthly drive that brings the car fully up to operating temperature delivers remarkable benefits.

Heat evaporates moisture that would otherwise accumulate in the engine and exhaust system. Fluids circulate and coat the surfaces they're designed to protect. Seals remain pliable instead of drying and cracking. Brakes and suspension components stay free rather than seizing from disuse.

**A critical distinction:** letting the car idle in the driveway is not a substitute for driving. Idling doesn't bring the engine and drivetrain to proper operating temperature and can actually promote moisture buildup in places you don't want it.

When regular driving isn't possible—and we understand the realities of northeastern winters—proper storage preparation becomes essential. That's where the following steps matter most.

## Mechanical Preparation

Think of storage preparation as setting your Corvette up for a healthy, trouble-free rest. Every system you address now is a problem you won't face in the spring.

### Engine Oil & Filter

Fresh oil is one of the most important protections you can give your engine during storage. Used oil contains moisture, acids, and combustion byproducts that attack internal surfaces over time. Clean oil neutralizes these threats.

#### CRITICAL WARNING

If the oil smells strongly of fuel or the level is higher than normal, do not start the engine. Fuel dilution destroys lubrication and can cause serious internal damage. This must be corrected before the car runs again.

Even low-mileage Corvettes benefit from oil service at least twice per year. Time degrades oil regardless of miles driven.

### Cooling System

Verify that the coolant is clean and appropriate for your model year. This matters more than many owners realize—older and newer Corvettes use distinctly different formulations, and the wrong coolant can promote corrosion while the car sits idle.

### Brake & Clutch Hydraulic Fluid

Brake fluid is hygroscopic by nature—it absorbs moisture from the air. Over time, that moisture corrodes internal brake components from the inside out, invisibly, until calipers seize or cylinders fail.

We recommend DOT 3, DOT 4, or DOT 5.1 fluid. Avoid silicone-based DOT 5 unless your system was specifically designed for it. This single maintenance item can prevent seized calipers and costly brake repairs.

### Transmission, Differential & Power Steering

Fresh fluid protects gears, bearings, and seals during storage. If these fluids are dark, burnt-smelling, or overdue for service, storage season is the perfect time to address them. Clean fluids sitting in place cause no harm; contaminated fluids cause damage even when the car isn't moving.

### Belts, Hoses & Rubber Components

Rubber ages whether the car is driven or not. Inspect belts and hoses now—replacing a marginal component today can prevent a breakdown next season. A cracked coolant hose that survives storage may fail on the first hot day of summer.

### Tires, Suspension & Parking Brake

Inflate tires to the upper end of the recommended pressure range. This reduces flat-spotting during extended storage.

**Do not leave the parking brake engaged during storage.** Brake pads can bond to rotors over time, especially in humid environments. Use wheel chocks instead.

If lifting the car, support it under the suspension rather than the frame. Improper lifting stresses bushings and joints in ways that cause problems later.

## Fuel System Protection

Fuel problems are among the most common issues we see after storage—and among the most preventable.

Fill the tank completely before storage. A full tank minimizes the air space where condensation forms. Add a high-quality fuel stabilizer before that final fill, allowing the treated fuel to circulate through the entire system during your last drive.

Avoid mixing stabilizer with other fuel additives unless you're certain they're compatible. More is not always better.

Untreated fuel degrades over time, forming varnish that clogs injectors, carburetors, and fuel passages. A few minutes of preparation here can save hours of frustration—and hundreds of dollars in repairs—later.

## Exterior & Interior Care

Wash the car thoroughly before storage, including the underside. Road grime, salt, and contaminants don't stop causing damage just because the car is parked—they continue their work in the dark.

Apply a quality wax or paint sealant to provide a protective barrier. Treat weather stripping lightly with silicone to prevent sticking and cracking over the storage months.

Inside the car, remove all food—even small crumbs become invitations. Clean and vacuum thoroughly. If your storage environment tends toward dampness, moisture absorbers can help protect interior materials and prevent the musty odors that develop in closed spaces.

## Rodent Prevention

Quiet, warm storage spaces attract rodents—and cars make excellent homes for creatures looking to escape the cold. The damage they cause to wiring and upholstery can be extensive and expensive.

Plug exhaust and intake openings with rags or steel wool when the engine is warm but not hot. Avoid mothballs inside the vehicle—the odor permeates everything and takes months

to dissipate. Peppermint oil on cotton balls, placed in shallow trays, works effectively without the lasting smell.

If using traps, place them away from the car rather than near it. The goal is to intercept rodents before they reach your Corvette, not to attract them toward it.

## **Battery Care**

Disconnect the negative battery terminal and connect a quality battery tender to maintain proper charge throughout storage. Modern electronics draw small amounts of current even when the car is off, and a dead battery in spring is the least of the problems this can cause—some electronic modules can be damaged by low-voltage conditions.

When reconnecting in the spring, ensure the ignition is firmly off to avoid voltage spikes that can damage sensitive components. We generally recommend leaving the battery installed in the car unless access or space constraints require removal.

## **Covering Your Corvette**

Use a high-quality, breathable car cover designed specifically for storage. The breathability is critical—it allows moisture to escape rather than trapping it against the paint where it causes damage.

Avoid plastic tarps or non-breathable covers. These create the exact conditions you're trying to prevent: moisture trapped against surfaces with nowhere to go.

## **Waking the Car Back Up**

When spring arrives, resist the urge to immediately turn the key. Take time to inspect underneath for any fluid that may have seeped during storage. Look for signs of rodent activity. Verify fluid levels and tire pressures.

If the car has been stored for more than a year, or if you have any uncertainty about its condition, consulting a professional before starting can prevent costly mistakes. Some issues are far easier to address before the engine runs than after.

*Cars don't wear out from being cared for. They wear out from neglect.*

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## A FINAL WORD

A Corvette that's stored thoughtfully will age better, perform better, and cost less to maintain overtime. The moisture and contaminated fluids that accumulate during careless storage cause far more damage than reasonable mileage ever will.

We've specialized in Corvette maintenance, restoration, and storage since 1974. Every generation has its own characteristics, and we've seen firsthand what works—and what leads to expensive repairs.

If you'd prefer complete peace of mind, we offer professional pre-storage inspections and storage preparation services designed specifically for Corvettes. Sometimes the best investment is letting someone with experience handle the details.

*Protect your investment properly. When it's done right, storage doesn't have to be stressful at all.*

Corvette Connection, LLC  
Serving Corvette owners since 1974