

## Caring for Your Window Awnings

Window awnings add a certain charm to many kinds of home designs and window structures. Their graceful arch and decorative patterns resemble subtly accented eyes on an attractive woman. Composed of metallic or vinyl materials, window awnings lend an air of charm that is often lacking in today's no-nonsense home structures.

If your home has window awnings, and you aren't sure how to care for them, here are some tips for keeping these important window shadings functional and appealing for years to come.

1. Are the awnings attached properly? Inspect the hinges and bolts to see if these have rusted or become loose. You may find that some of the fixture parts are starting to crack due to the weather or long-time use. Take a look at your home's siding or brick to see if the area is sturdy where the awnings attach to the house or window frames. If you have been using the awnings for many years, and if your climate can produce extreme seasonal weather, you may have to replace some of the hardware to keep the awnings firmly in place.

2. Are the awnings in good shape? Whether they are metal, aluminum, vinyl, or made of another substance, the material, especially if older, may be starting to show its age. Check each vinyl strip or the canvas flaps for signs of wear. These could include tears, dents, rips, cracks, chips, and rusting or rotting. With the latter, you may be able to apply a fungicide or other agent to kill mildew or mold and repaint or replace that part of the awning. Small chips or broken areas likewise may be repairable with a kit or new part from the dealer or manufacturer. Look for bird nests and insect infestation so you can remove these promptly to prevent further damage.

3. Spruce up your awnings. In some cases the frame may be intact, while the awning covering could be holey, dented, or otherwise becoming unusable. Shop for replacement awning material at the dealer where the original awnings were purchased, or at a store or online website that offers quality replacement products. If you don't know how to install the replacement awnings, call an expert handyman who can do the job properly for you. If the awning requires rust prevention treatment or repainting, you can probably handle these tasks on your own. But if not, a repairperson can do these things at minimal cost.

Use a pressure hose to wash the awnings, along with the exterior of your home, about once a year. This will help to loosen accumulated mud and debris, like twigs, and it will keep your awnings looking clean and neat year-round. Insects, birds, or rodents that are starting to build nests in the awnings will be ousted before too much damage is done. Give attention and care to your awnings while they are still in good shape to keep them looking terrific for as long as possible.

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### About the Author

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