

The Ultimate Ontario Winter Bird Station Setup & Biosecurity Checklist

Use this rapid checklist to audit your current setup or plan a brand-new, biosecure bird feeding station capable of withstanding severe Canadian winters.

Phase 1: Hardware & Seed Acquisition (Store Run)

- **Primary Pole:** Verified rust-resistant galvanized steel or powder-coated finish.
- **Feeder Material:** Selected recycled Poly-lumber (HDPE) or UV-stabilized polycarbonate (No porous wood).
- **Predator Guard:** Purchased a weight-activated motorized feeder OR a standalone squirrel baffle.
- **Nutrition Core:** Stocked up on black oil sunflower seeds and high-fat suet blocks.
- **Biosecurity Kit:** Acquired veterinary-grade enzyme cleaner or hydrogen peroxide (No standard bleach).

Phase 2: Yard Placement & Structural Setup

- **The 12-Foot Rule:** Measured exactly 12 feet away from jumping hazards (fences, roofs, low branches).
- **Window Safety:** Station is either closer than 3 feet OR further than 30 feet from large glass windows to prevent fatal strikes.
- **Foundation:** Metal ground auger is driven at least 18 inches deep into the soil (past the frost line).
- **Baffle Installation:** Baffle is securely mounted on the pole *before* attaching any hanging hooks or feeders.
- **Staggered Heights:** Feeders are hung at varying levels to systematically reduce flock crowding and territorial aggression.

Phase 3: The Biosecurity & Maintenance Protocol

- **Weekly Visual Check:** Inspected all seeds for mold, clumping, or freezing. (Discard immediately if found).
- **Ground Clearance:** Raked and removed discarded hulls and droppings from beneath the station to deter ground rodents.
- **Sanitization Cycle (Bi-Weekly):** Dismantled feeders and soaked all non-electronic parts in specialized enzyme cleaner for 10-15 minutes.
- **Drying Phase:** Allowed all components to air-dry completely before refilling (moisture is the enemy).
- **Outbreak Protocol:** Committed to taking down all feeders immediately for 2 weeks if a sick bird (puffed up, lethargic, swollen eyes) is spotted.