While aquatic salamanders may be active under the ice through the winter, their land-based cousins are not. Like toads, these salamanders will find shelter and hibernate in underground burrows, under logs and leaf litter on the forest floor, and in rocky crevices.

Antifreeze forms inside the wood frog’s cells in preparation for hibernation, creating a thick liquid. Ice forms between the cells without harming the frog. While frozen, the wood frog’s heart is completely stopped.

Most frogs hibernate buried in the mud at the bottom of the pond. Instead of breathing with their lungs, as they would in the summer, they get the oxygen they need by absorbing it through their skin from the surrounding mud. Toads and some frogs hibernate under logs and leaf litter on the forest floor. A blanket of snow will help to keep them warm enough to survive the winter.

Eating plenty of food through summer and fall will make certain they have enough stored body fat for winter. This body fat will provide all the food they will need until spring when food is plentiful once again.

Snakes, like this garter snake, gather in crevices in rocky places and underground holes. When spring comes, the ground warms. They leave the confined space and begin sunning themselves to warm up.

When air temperature falls, so does the body temperature, heart rate and digestion of these animals. They need to get underground below the frost line or into a sheltered area where temperatures will not dip below freezing.