

Necessary Equipment

An emergency situation on the road can arise at any time, and you must be prepared. In addition to making sure you have a regular tune-up, a full tank of gas, and fresh anti-freeze, you should carry the following items in your trunk at all times.

Properly inflated spare tire, wheel wrench and jack. Shovel. Jumper cables. Tow and tire chains. Bag of salt or cat litter. Tool Kit.

If you become stranded –

Do not leave your car unless you know exactly where you are, how far it is to possible help, and are certain it will improve your situation.

Call 911 if cell service is available. Follow instructions you receive from the emergency dispatchers.

To attract attention, light two flares and place one on each end of the car at a safe distance.

If you are certain the exhaust pipe is not blocked, you may run the car's heater for 10 minutes every hour, depending on the fuel level. To protect from frostbite, use woollen clothes and blankets to stay warm.

Keep at least one window open slightly, as heavy snow and ice can seal a car shut.

If you must leave your vehicle, write down your name, address, phone number and destination. Place on dashboard for easy retrieval.

Prepare your winter car survival kit

Preparedness ensures that should something happen, you have supplies to help. Keep the following in your car at all times:

Ice scraper and snow brush

Flashlights and extra batteries.

Multitool with knife

Extra set of warm clothes

Extra hats, gloves, scarfs

Blankets

Waterproof matches and candle

Small can (to melt snow for drinking)

Local maps & a compass

Tool kit including screwdrivers, pliers, wrench, jackstand, spare tire, jumper cables, small shovel, tire chains, cat litter (to gain traction in snow or ice)

Road Flares

30 or more feet of rope in case you need to exit the vehicle (to use as guideline)

Toilet paper and tissues

Bottled water

Food – dried fruit and nuts, granola bar, jerky or similar

A fully charged cell phone if in range of cell towers
Spare plastic bags in multiple sizes – can be used as insulating layer, or between socks and shoes to keep socks dry, or to hold things.

First aid kit, including bandages of various sizes, pain relief medication, etc as your situation demands

Something to occupy your time while you wait, if that is the best option: a book, a book of puzzles, knitting, pen and paper, etc.

Winter Safety Driving Tips



PLACE YOUR TOWN INFORMATION HERE

Safety tips for winter driving

When the weather changes, so do driving conditions. The following tips will help keep you and others safe:

Check road conditions before you go – you can check online, on your smartphone, or listen to weather related radio alerts.

Remove snow and ice from your car before driving (including the roof) and making sure all lights are visible.

Accelerate, decelerate, and turn slowly and gradually. Keep maximum speeds congruent with conditions – which may be less than the speed limit!

Increase your following distance.

Never use cruise control while in winter driving conditions.

Do use non-freezing windshield washer fluid.

Use snow tires or chains as appropriate and legal for your area.

Your Car

Prepare for winter by checking the following:

Check the ignition, brakes, wiring, hoses, and fan belts. Adjust the spark plugs if necessary.

Check the air, fuel and emissions filters, and the PCV (primary control valve). Inspect the distributor.

Check the battery.

Check the tires for air, sidewall damage and tread depth. Replace if necessary.

Check antifreeze levels and the freezing point.

Driving safely on icy roads

Ice or snow on the roadway decreases the amount of friction between your tires and the road, which means that corrections you attempt to make take longer than on clear roads. Adjust for this by decreasing your maximum speeds, increasing the following distance between you and the car in front, and making adjustments in speed and course gradually and in time to stop when you wanted to. Figure out how your car handles on ice – and then remember it for next time!

Turn on your lights so others can see you. Keep them and your windshield free of ice or snow.

Be especially careful on bridges, overpasses, and infrequently travelled roads, which will freeze first. Even if the temperature is just above freezing, you may encounter ice in these locations.

Do not pass snow plows and sanding/salt trucks. They have limited visibility, and the road in front of them may be entirely untreated.

If your rear wheels skid

Take your foot off the accelerator.

Steer in the direction you want your front wheels to go. If your rear wheels are sliding left, steer left and vice versa. If during the course of stopping, your rear wheels turn the other way, turn your front to match.

If you have anti-lock breaks (ABS), you can just keep the break pedal depressed – these will pump automatically to ensure faster stopping.

If you do not have ABS, press the break pedal repeatedly to stop faster.

If your front wheels skid

Take your foot off the gas and shift to neutral, but don't try to steer immediately.

As the wheels skid sideways, they will slow the vehicles and traction will return. As it does, steer in the direction you want to go. Then put the transmission in drive or release the clutch, and accelerate gently.

If you get stuck

Do not spin your wheels, as this only digs you in.

Turn your wheels side to side a few times to push snow out of the way. Use a light touch on the gas, to ease your car out.

If necessary, use your shovel to clear snow away from the wheels. Then spread kitty litter, gravel, or salt on the space cleared to help with traction.

Try rocking the vehicle by going from forward to reverse several times and using a bit of gas to see if you can move.

If unsuccessful call for help or flag down passing motorists for help.

Road safety

When winter weather hits, do not drive unless necessary. Obey all travel restrictions in effect.

If you must leave, double check essential supplies before leaving. Make sure you have a full tank of gas, food, water and blankets or sleeping bags.

Make sure your cell phone or two-way radio has power, and keep it charged. If you should become stranded, then you can call for help!

