

WINTER DRIVING

TIPS

Vehicle Maintenance

Start winter off right by ensuring your vehicle is in good condition. Check the battery, tire tread and windshield wipers. Keep windows clear, put no-freeze fluid in the washer reservoir, and check the antifreeze.

Know Your Car

If possible, practice driving in icy or snowy conditions in an empty parking lot in full daylight. On the road:

- Slow down and allow plenty of distance to stop for vehicles ahead of you.
- Know what your brakes will do. In general, if you have antilock brakes, apply firm, continuous pressure. If you don't have antilock brakes, pump the brakes gently.
- In a skid, ease your foot off the gas while steering in the direction you want to go. Stay off the pedals (gas and brake) until you are able to maintain control of your vehicle. This procedure, known as "steering into the skid," will bring the back end of your car in line with the front.

Plan Ahead

- Check the weather, road and traffic conditions. Leave early if necessary.
- Familiarize yourself with directions and maps before you go, even if you use a GPS system. Let others know your route and expected arrival time.
- Keep gas tank close to full. If you get stuck in traffic or snow, you might need more fuel to get home or keep warm.
- If possible, avoid driving in hazardous conditions or wait until conditions improve before venturing out.



Stock Your Vehicle

Carry items for common winter driving tasks and supplies you might need in an emergency:

- Snow shovel, broom and ice scraper;
- Abrasive material such as sand or kitty litter, in case your vehicle gets stuck in the snow;
- Jumper cables, flashlight and warning devices such as flares and markers;
- Blankets;
- Cell phone with charger, water, food and any necessary medicine (for longer trips or in lightly populated areas).

Stopped or Stalled

- Stay with your car and don't overexert yourself.
- Put bright markers on the antenna or windows and keep the interior dome light turned on.
- To avoid carbon monoxide poisoning, clear the exhaust pipe and run your vehicle only long enough to stay warm.

Source: www.NHTSA.gov

