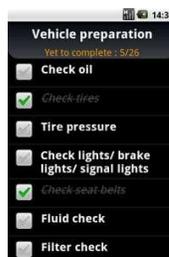




Fall and winter driving

Fall has arrived and winter is around the corner, it's time to prepare for adverse conditions. Driving in the winter means snow, sleet and ice that can lead to slower traffic, hazardous road conditions, hot tempers and unforeseen dangers. To help you make it safely through winter, here are some suggestions to make sure that you and your vehicle are prepared.

First step-Winterize Your Car



Start with a checkup that includes:

- Check hoses and fan belts
- Checking the battery
- Checking the tires for air, sidewall wear and tread depth and rating (are they all season or mud & snow rated)
- Checking antifreeze levels and the freeze line
- Replace wipers add windshield cleaner with winter rating (such as de-icer or -20 etc.)
- lights

Your car should have a tune-up (check the owner's manual for the recommended interval) to ensure better gas mileage, quicker starts and faster response on pick-up and passing power.

Necessary Equipment

An emergency situation on the road can arise at any time and you must be prepared. You should carry the following items in your trunk:

- Properly inflated spare tire, wheel wrench and tripod-type jack
- Shovel
- Jumper cables

- Tow and tire chains (Talk to your local tire dealer about which chains are the best fit for your vehicle and practice installing them).
- Bag of salt or cat litter
- Tool kit
- Ice scraper and snow brush
- Emergency flares



Essential Supplies

Be prepared with a "survival kit" that should always remain in the car. Replenish after use. Essential supplies include:

- Working flashlight and extra batteries
- Reflective triangles and brightly-colored cloth
- Compass
- First aid kit
- Wooden stick matches in a waterproof container
- Scissors and string/cord
- Hand and foot warmers
- Non-perishable, high-energy foods like unsalted canned nuts, dried fruits, and hard candy.

In addition, if you are driving long distances under cold, snowy, and icy conditions, you should also carry supplies to keep you warm such as heavy woolen mittens, socks, a cap and blankets.

Weather

At any temperature -- 20° Fahrenheit below zero or 90° Fahrenheit above -- weather affects road and driving conditions and can pose serious problems. It is important to monitor forecasts on the Web, radio, TV, cable weather channel, or in the daily papers.

Ice and Snow, Take It Slow!

Protect yourself and your passengers. Allow extra time to reach your destination during inclement weather. Do not be the driver who shuts down the pass.

- Drive for conditions – slower speeds, slower acceleration, slower steering, and slower braking in winter conditions.
- Use your headlights.
- Don't use cruise control.
- Four and all-wheel drive vehicles will not stop or steer better in icy conditions.

- Leave extra room between your vehicle and the vehicle in front of you. And remember, big trucks take longer to stop.
- Slow down when approaching intersections, off-ramps, bridges, or shady spots.
- Brush the snow off your vehicle, especially your lights, before you drive. It makes you more visible plus snow and ice flying off a vehicle can be dangerous to other drivers.
- If you find yourself behind a snowplow, stay behind it until it is safe to pass. Remember that a snowplow driver has a limited field of vision. Stay back (15 car lengths) until you're sure it is safe to pass or until the plow pulls off the road.
- Slow down and be extra cautious near the chain-up and removal areas. There are often people out of their vehicles moving around.

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 you will improve your situation.
- To attract attention, light two flares and place one at each end of the car a safe distance away. Hang a brightly colored cloth from your antenna.
- If you are sure the car's exhaust pipe is not blocked, run the engine and heater for about 10 minutes every hour or so depending upon the amount of gas in the tank.
- To protect yourself from frostbite and hypothermia use the woolen items and blankets to keep warm.
- Keep at least one window open slightly. Heavy snow and ice can seal a car shut.
- Eat a hard candy to keep your mouth moist.

Not only is it important to dress and be prepared for the cold, also make notification for departure, path of travel and expected arrival times to friends and family.



This information is provided to you by the IES safety committee as suggestions only