



# Winter: Your Vehicle and You

Driving in the winter means changes in the way you drive. Snow, sleet and ice can lead to slower traffic, hazardous road conditions and unforeseen dangers. Keep yourself and your family safe. Prepare your vehicle for the upcoming winter season.

## Weather

At any temperature – 20° F below zero or 90° F above zero – weather affects road and driving conditions and can pose serious problems.

Your local radio, TV and newspaper forecasts will give you the most up-to-date information on weather and road conditions.

## Prepare your vehicle

Have your vehicle serviced regularly (check the owner's manual for the recommended interval) to ensure better gas mileage, quicker starts, faster response on pick-up and passing power, and to prevent major problems.

- ✓ You need to check the concentration level of the antifreeze in your vehicle's engine. This is done by using an antifreeze tester which is inserted into the water reservoir of your car. Do not open the radiator cap!
- ✓ Add a stronger windshield cleaning/de-icer fluid solution to keep the spray from freezing. (It is best to use a product that has a cleaner as well. This allows you to dislodge the road grime from the windshield.)
- ✓ Check air pressure in your tires (including the spare) and replace any worn tires. (Having proper wheel alignment will lead to a longer life for your tires).

## Vehicle Checklist for Winter Weather

Before winter starts, check these in your vehicle:

- Heater and windshield defroster
- Battery
- Brakes
- Brake fluid
- Ignition system
- Lights and emergency flashers
- Tires
- Exhaust
- Fuel
- Oil
- Radiator
- Power steering fluid

Keep your fuel tank full or near full to avoid being caught on the road in long lines of slow moving traffic. (This also is a reserve to be able to run the engine and heater if you become stranded).

Always carry an emergency kit in your vehicle (see next page).

**Safety**  
at HOME

**National Safety Council**

saves lives by preventing injuries and deaths at work, in homes and communities, and on the roads, through leadership, research, education and advocacy.

## Vehicle Emergency Kit

An emergency situation on the road can arise at any time. Be prepared with a "survival kit" that should always remain in the vehicle. Your kit should include:

- Working flashlight and extra batteries
- Flares
- First aid kit
- A properly inflated spare tire, wheel wrench and the jack designed for your vehicle
- Tow and tire chains
- Jumper cables and a toolkit
- Blanket, warm clothes, hat and gloves
- Brightly colored cloth
- A bag of salt, sand or non-clumping kitty litter to use for added traction when a tire is stuck
- Compass
- Extra washer fluid
- Ice scraper, snow brush and shovel
- Wooden stick matches in a waterproof container
- Non-perishable, high energy foods like unsalted canned nuts, dried fruits and hard candy

## If You Become Stranded

- Do not leave your vehicle 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 vehicle a safe distance away
- Hang a brightly colored cloth from your antenna
- If you are sure the vehicle's exhaust pipe is not blocked, run the engine and heater for about 10 minutes every hour or so depending on the amount of gas in the tank
- Protect yourself from frostbite and hypothermia; use woolen items and blankets to keep warm
- Keep at least one window open slightly as heavy snow and ice can seal a vehicle shut
- Eat hard candy to keep your mouth moist

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Keep you gas tank full or almost full in the winter months.

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