

5 Helpful Hints for Driving in Winter Weather

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With cold weather comes the need to be extra careful on the road. Snow and ice on roads and reduced visibility from winter precipitation make driving potentially hazardous. Brush up on these winter driving safety tips to avoid trouble.

- 1. Watch the weather.** One way that drivers can limit their winter travel risk is to plan trips for relatively good weather. Stay up to date on changing weather and traffic reports to anticipate and avoid stormy roadways.
- 2. Slow down.** A little more caution makes a big difference when roads are slick. Slowing down by 5 mph or more will help limit your potential for damage in a collision. Keeping more car lengths between vehicles gives you more time for any sudden stops, too.
- 3. Know your extra features.** The biggest example is anti-lock brakes. Where tapping brakes works for controlling skid in traditional braking, pumping ABS can be dangerous. Road safety experts advise that anti-lock brakes and other features are no substitute for safe stopping distances and reasonable speeds. Some experts also warn against using cruise control on slick roads.
- 4. Condition your vehicle for winter.** If your state allows it, install tire chains or tire studs to add traction. No matter what state you're in, it's a good idea to keep tires at proper inflation. Also, be sure to remove troublesome ice from your windshield and windows, and big drifts of snow from the hood and roof.
- 5. Stock a winter emergency kit.** In case you have to pull over during a storm, be prepared with a winter emergency kit. Recommended items include: flashlight and batteries, hand-warmers, blankets, drinking water, shovel and ice scraper, jumper cables, and emergency lights or flares.

