



Winter Driving Tips

Wintertime driving tests the skills of even the most experienced drivers. Review these tips to make sure you are ready for winter travel.

1. **Be able to see and be seen.** Clean all the snow and ice off of your windshield, other windows, outside mirrors, lights and reflectors. Make sure your vehicle is equipped with good wiper blades, and that wiper arms are exerting enough pressure on the blades to ensure a clean sweep. If moisture or ice builds up on the inside or outside of your windshield, stop and clean it off.
2. **Tires with good deep treads** are essential for good cornering and handling on slippery roads. Check the air pressure frequently to maintain the manufacturer's recommended pressure.
3. **Get the feel of the road.** Occasionally try your brakes or gently depress your accelerator while driving. When you have found out just how slippery the road is, adjust your speed accordingly. Rising temperatures greatly increase the slipperiness of ice and snow.
4. **Stretch your "following" distance.** Knowing that winter surfaces increase stopping distance 3 to 12 times, the smart driver increases his normal dry road following distance. Heavy trucks require a longer stopping distance on slippery roads than passenger cars. And don't tailgate.
5. **Brake before curves.** All vehicles are particularly sensitive to over-powering, over-steering, and over-braking on curves. Unseen hazards around the bend may require an evasive action, so turn your steering wheel slowly and smoothly, keep a constant speed in the turn, and pump your brakes carefully if it's necessary to slow down or stop.
6. **Pump your brakes.** The key to stopping under control on slippery surfaces is to avoid locking the wheels. A rapid pumping of brakes will provide short intervals of braking and of rolling wheels alternately, and will enable you to maintain steering control while stopping.
7. **Use proper lights.** Never drive with parking lights instead of headlights in winter's early dusk and poor visibility. Parking lights can cause an oncoming driver to think you are farther away than you are. Keep headlights clean; dirty ones can greatly reduce your own seeing distance at night.

Sources: CNA and Gowrie Group, www.gowrie.com, 2010. This information is advisory in nature. No liability is assumed by reason of the information in this document.

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