

A Few Reminders for Safe Winter Driving

Winter driving can often times be very tricky. Always do your best to remain calm and allow yourself extra travel time so you don't feel the pressure of being rushed. Here are a few reminders for safely navigating poor road conditions.

1. First, remember to clear all ice and snow from your vehicle for better visibility.
2. Adjust your speed to the road conditions. High speeds and poor traction are a potentially deadly combination.
3. Always maintain safe following distances.
4. Keep two hands on the wheel as much as possible for better control.
5. Remember that four-wheel drive vehicles may give you improved maneuverability in snow and ice, but they do not reduce stopping distances. Always maintain an appropriate speed and following distance regardless of the type of vehicle you're driving.
6. Don't forget that bridges, ramps and overpasses freeze first, so reduce your speed as you approach them.
7. To avoid spins and skids, brake carefully on snow and ice.
8. If you do begin to spin or skid, turn the steering wheel in the direction you want your front tires to go.

If you do get stuck, first try to turn the steering wheel back and forth a few times to push snow out of the way and then keep a light touch on the gas pedal to ease forward; spinning your wheels only digs you in deeper. You can also try to rock your car out of trouble by shifting to reverse and giving it a little gas, shifting to drive and giving it a little gas and repeating this until you break free. However, you should always check your vehicle's manual before doing this in order to avoid transmission damage.

Anticipating problems before they arise should aid in maintaining control of your vehicle. Poor road conditions require better judgment, patience and often adjusting to slow speeds.