



Winter Driving Safety Tips

When you live in an area in which winter means snowy and icy roads, you need to take extra measures to make sure that you and your family arrive safely. Please take a moment to read our safe driving tips and learn other techniques for helping to make your winter driving safer.

Stay off the road if possible. The best advice for driving in bad winter weather is not to drive at all. If you really don't have to go out, don't. Fatal crashes are [14 percent more likely](#) to happen on the first snowy day of the season than on days following.

- ✓ If possible, delay travel until the snow plows and salt/sand trucks have had a chance to clear the roads
- ✓ If you must drive in snowy conditions, make sure your car is prepared for the winter season and that you know how to handle slippery road conditions

Practice makes perfect. The more comfortable you are maintaining and regaining control of your vehicle, the better winter driver you'll be. If you're nervous about driving in snow, consider spending some time practicing.

- ✓ Practice in a large, empty parking lot (preferably without light poles!) during daylight hours
- ✓ Pay attention to how your car responds on an icy or slick surface. If you begin to skid, remove your foot from the gas and turn your steering wheel in the direction of the skid to counter the motion
- ✓ Practice until you're comfortable regaining control of your car and know how your vehicle handles in snowy conditions

Drive Safely.

- ✓ When driving in snow, avoid abrupt maneuvers and accelerate, brake and steer smoothly
- ✓ Be mindful of the distance between your vehicle and those ahead; don't follow too closely. Adding space between you and others provides more reaction time and room to stop. A well-known "rule" for dry conditions is to follow at least two seconds behind at 30 mph and four seconds at 60 mph. You should double these times in wet conditions and triple them when driving in snow.
- ✓ Avoid distractions and be predictable by signaling well ahead of any turns or lane changes as other motorists may not be driving as cautiously as you

Anti-lock Brakes, Traction Control and Vehicle Stability Systems – Things you should know:

- ✓ While ABS brakes will help keep your vehicle from skidding, they don't provide more traction.
- ✓ If you have ABS, don't pump the brakes if you feel your vehicle skid; instead, apply steady pressure to the brake pedal. You will feel the brakes pulse – this is normal and a sign that the system is doing its job.
- ✓ Traction control helps prevent wheel spin in wet or wintry conditions by reducing the engine's power and/or applying the brakes. Like ABS, traction control doesn't improve traction.
- ✓ Vehicle stability systems sense when a vehicle strays from its intended course (by monitoring steering and braking input) and can selectively brake any of the four wheels and/or reduce engine power to help keep your vehicle from sliding

All-Wheel and Four-Wheel Drive. Having all-wheel or four-wheel drive does not make you invincible - even these vehicles can encounter trouble on winter roads.

- ✓ Having AWD/FWD can make winter driving easier by greatly enhancing the ability to accelerate in slippery conditions, but these systems provide no advantage when stopping or turning

Most of All, Remain Vigilant! Keep in mind that driving in snow, sleet and ice is very treacherous. Whether a vehicle has AWD/FWD, ABS, traction control or a vehicle stability system, no technology, regardless of how sophisticated, can overcome the laws of physics or the effects of careless driving. Even if you maintain control of your vehicle, not everyone else will. So stay alert and don't get lulled into a false sense of security. Allow extra time to reach your destination and do everything slowly and gently. Rapid movements can lead to skids and loss of vehicle control.

Visit [Allstate Be Aware and Prepare](#) and the [Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety](#) for more, helpful information.