THINK SAFETY

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Tips for winter driving

Weather, road conditions and frustrated motorists can make driving hazardous during winter months. In addition, fewer daylight hours during winter leads to reduced visibility. With many circumstances beyond control in the wintertime, control what you can by taking safety-focused steps.

Important points to remember

- Check weather forecasts, traffic and road conditions before leaving.
- All vehicle occupants should always wear their seat belts.
- Clear your vehicle of any accumulated snow and ice, including all windows, side mirrors, headlights, taillights and signal lights.
- It takes longer to come to a stop when roads are wet, icy and/or snow covered. Reduce speed, increase following distance and avoid cruise control in slippery conditions.
- Exercise caution around snowplows because these vehicles may travel slower, make wide turns and stop frequently in addition to deflecting snow, ice and slush.
- Bridges and overpasses will typically ice or freeze before other road surfaces.
- Watch for:
  - Black ice
  - Rain freezing on contact with road surfaces
  - Partially melted snow and ice refreezing as temperatures drop

If you become stranded in wintry weather, remain with your vehicle and avoid overexertion. Try to make your vehicle as visible as possible with warning devices, flares or other visible markers. Make sure the exhaust pipe is clear of any snow to help avoid carbon monoxide buildup and only run your vehicle long enough to remain warm.

A little extra preparation during the winter may prove beneficial in preventing accidents and saving lives.

Prepare your vehicle by checking:

- Coolant, oil and power steering fluid
- Windshield washer fluid and wiper blades (use fluid with de-icer or an all-weather mixture)
- Tire inflation, tread depth and general condition
- Heater and defroster
- Battery
- Lights and signals
- Fuel level (maintain at least half of a tank of fuel)
- Floor mats (not obstructing or interfering with pedals)

Contents for your vehicle:

- Blanket
- Extra clothing
- Sand, ice melt or cat litter in case your vehicle gets stuck
- Shovel
- Snow brush and ice scraper
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- Jumper cables
- Warning devices
- Cell phone and charger
- Non-perishable food items and drinking water
- Any necessary medications (prescription or over the counter)

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