

# Winter Driving Tips

## Driving in Ice & Snow:

When you must drive, clear the ice and snow from your vehicle, *all* windows and free the windshield wipers. Be sure the windshield washer reservoir is adequately filled with a freeze-resistant cleaning solution. Drive slowly. Even if your vehicle has good traction in ice and snow, other drivers will be traveling cautiously. Don't disrupt the flow of traffic by driving faster than everyone else. In a rear-wheel drive vehicle, you can usually feel a loss of traction or the beginning of a skid. There may be no such warning in a front-wheel drive, however. Front-wheel drives *do* handle better in ice and snow, but they *do not* have flawless traction, and skids can occur unexpectedly. Don't let the more secure feel and handling of a front-wheel drive car cause you to drive faster than you should.

## If you find yourself stuck:

- Turn your wheels from side to side a few times to push snow out of the way. Keep a light touch on the gas, and ease forward. Don't spin your wheels – you will just dig in deeper.
- Rocking the vehicle is another way to get unstuck. (Check your owner's manual first - it can damage the transmission on some vehicles.) Shift from forward to reverse, and back again. Each time the vehicle is in gear, touch the gas lightly until the vehicle gets moving.
- If you have a front-wheel drive vehicle, the snow tires should be on the front - the driving axle - for better traction in mud or snow.

## If stranded:

- You may feel helpless, stuck in the snow in a lonely place, but there are things you can do to survive until help reaches you.
- Stay in the vehicle. Don't wander and get lost or frostbitten.
- Run the engine for heat about once every hour, or every half hour in severe cold. Clean snow from around the end of the tail pipe to prevent carbon monoxide buildup. For extra heat, burn a candle inside a coffee can - but don't set the can on fabric. *Make sure the vehicle is NOT air tight, by opening a window a little.*
- Clear inside heater vents...the grill under the windshield.
- Avoid alcohol. It lowers body temperature and will cause you to become drowsy.
- Leave one window cracked open. Freezing winds and driving, wet snow can quickly seal a vehicle.
- Signal to other motorists that you're stranded by using flares or flashlights, or by tying a piece of brightly colored cloth to the radio antenna..

**If your rear wheels start to skid:**

- Turn the steering wheel in the direction you want the front wheels to go. If your rear wheels are sliding left, steer left. If they're sliding right, steer right.
- If your rear wheels start sliding the other way as you recover, ease the steering wheel toward that side. You might have to steer left and right a few times to get your vehicle completely under control.
- If your car has an anti-lock braking system (ABS), keep your foot on the pedal. If not, pump the pedal gently, pumping more rapidly as your car slows down. Braking hard with non-anti-lock brakes will make the skid worse.

**If your front wheels skid:**

- Take your foot off the gas and shift to neutral, but *don't* try to steer immediately.
- As the wheels skid sideways, they will slow the vehicle and traction will return. As it does, steer in the direction you want to go. Then put the transmission in "drive" or release the clutch, and accelerate gently.

To avoid skids, brake carefully and gently on snow or ice. "Squeeze" your brakes in slow, steady strokes. Allow the wheels to keep rolling. If they start to lock up, ease off the brake pedal. As you slow down, you may also want to shift into a lower gear.

When sleet, freezing rain or snow start to fall, remember that bridges, ramps, and overpasses are likely to freeze first. Be aware that slippery spots may still remain after road crews have cleared the highways.



**DRIVE SAFELY !**

