

"For safety's sake—do something."

Winter Driving Safety

No one wants to break down, but especially not in the cold or snowy weather. Now is a good time to get your car serviced and your mind thinking and preparing for your travels coming in the next few months. Winter driving safety should apply at home, work, and play.

Car: Your car needs to be winterized and running at peak performance for safe winter driving. Have a strong battery, fluids checked and full, fresh windshield wipers, and good tires for traction and control. Now is a good time to have all of the car's systems checked before the first surprise snow and ice storm hit. Keep the gas tank full and your cell phone charged. These same tips should apply to your rental car.

Steer into a skid and press firmly on antilock brakes. For older vehicles with non-antilock brakes, you should pump and release. If your vehicle breaks down, pull as far off of the road as possible and put your four-way flashers on. Stay in the car, buckled up, and call for help. For road emergencies call 911 or the local number for highway assistance.

Plan Your Trip: Always check the weather and plan accordingly - expect the unexpected. When traveling away from home, it is even more important to know the local conditions as not every place is prepared for snow and ice. Program your car radio for traffic reports and emergency messages and check the weather apps on your phone, if able to do such. Let others know your route and travel times and give yourself extra time to arrive at your destination. Keep a minimum of extra clothing, a blanket, high-calorie non-perishable food, and a first aid kit in your car. Depending on your travels, you will likely need to customize your survival kit.

Prepare Yourself: Stay rested - stay alert. Driving in ice and snow requires you to be mentally alert and rely on past driving experience to analyze situations and stay safe. Visibility is often less, while reaction and stopping times are greater, during winter driving. Slow down, increase your distance between cars, and avoid texting and talking on the phone when driving in winter conditions. Always buckle up and make sure your passengers are too.

**Safety Scott says,
"Safety always is
ALWAYS!"**