

Prepare for Winter Driving

Tips to Prepare for Winter Road Conditions

Snow falls in many parts of Canada, and it's important to get ready for slippery and sometimes unpredictable driving conditions.

To be prepared for winter driving conditions, both the Automotive Industries Association (AIA) of Canada and the Canadian Automobile Association (CAA) recommend the following:

- Let others know your itinerary before you go out on the road.
- Strongly consider putting winter tires on your vehicle, regardless of your area's snow accumulation. Rubber in all-season tires starts to lose elasticity and harden at around 7°C, significantly reducing the tire's ability to grip the road. Winter tires harden at around -40°C, allowing them to maintain elasticity in much colder temperatures.
- Carry a fully charged cell phone to call a friend or roadside assistance if needed.
- Take your car into your local service technician to have it maintained for the seasonal transition. This service can include having your battery inspected for wear before the start of the season and ensuring the right grade of oil in your vehicle for optimal winter use.

Invest the time in preparing a winter driving kit for your vehicle. Suggested contents of a winter driving kit include:

- Warm winter gloves, toque and boots
- Blanket or extra clothing
- Bag of sand or kitty litter (non-clumping)
- Small shovel
- Ice scraper and/or snow brush
- Snacks for energy
- Extra windshield washer fluid
- First aid kit
- Hardcopy local map (not just a GPS unit)
- Flashlight and batteries
- Flares
- Waterproof matches
- Battery jumper cables

Five Easy Steps to Getting Your Car Ready for Winter

Fall is a good time to ensure that your vehicle is ready to safely take on winter's nasty weather conditions.

Here are five vehicle maintenance tips to consider that will keep your vehicle running efficiently and reduce its environmental impact:



1. Keep your vehicle properly tuned for optimum

performance. Regular tune-ups and maintenance will help your vehicle pollute less and burn less fuel. A tune-up can improve gas mileage by an average of four percent, while fixing a serious maintenance issue, such as a faulty oxygen sensor, can improve gas mileage by up to 40 percent.

2. Check your tires. Tires that are not properly inflated require your engine to work harder to move your vehicle and, therefore, to burn more gas. This increases fuel costs and increases the risk of engine damage. Check your vehicle's owner's manual to find its optimal tire pressure, and check the pressure whenever there are significant changes in temperature.

3. Check your vehicle's gas cap. Gas caps that are loose, damaged or missing can cause gas to evaporate, which harms the environment and increases your number of visits to the gas station.

4. Replace dirty air filters. An air filter that is clogged with dirt and dust causes your vehicle to burn more fuel for the same amount of air intake, leading to wasted gas and power loss in the engine. Replacing a clogged air filter can improve your vehicle's efficiency by up to 10 percent.

5. Have spark plugs checked and replaced if necessary. Spark plugs wear out over time, and as they get older, they lose their ability to spark properly. This affects your engine's performance and results in a loss of power. A misfiring spark plug can reduce your vehicle's fuel efficiency by up to 30 percent

10 Tips to Prevent Problems Before They Occur

1. Get your vehicle ready for winter in the fall.
2. Install four matching winter tires.
3. Pack an emergency kit.
4. Learn and practice winter driving techniques before you need them.
5. Plan your trip, check road and weather conditions.
6. Remove all snow from your vehicle before each trip.
7. Give yourself extra travel time in bad weather.
8. Avoid using overdrive and cruise control on slippery roads.
9. Travel with a fully charged cell phone.
10. SLOW DOWN and wear your seatbelt.

Winter weather conditions pose unique challenges and safety risks for most Canadian drivers. To help Canadians prepare for winter driving, CAA partnered with Transport Canada and released a brochure listing these top 10 winter driving safety tips drivers need to know.

The goal is to help Canadian motorists prevent problems before they occur. The brochure, called *You, Your Vehicle and Winter Driving*, is a handy guide that includes information about how Canadians can make their vehicles winter-ready, how to prepare for and drive in bad weather, and what to pack in a winter survival kit.

Download your copy of the 10 Tips brochure at <http://www.caa.ca/working-for-you/safe-driving/winter-driving/>

source: Canadian Automobile Association, www.caa.ca



Education and Training

The Saskatchewan Safety Council offers various training and education related to safe driving. Every driver has had their vehicle in some type of skid at one point during their driving experience. Whether it was to stop the vehicle quickly and unexpectedly, swerving to avoid a potential hazard, or loss of control on the road surface, the situation was serious. Visit www.sasksafety.org or call 306.757.3197 to find out more.

Safety Talk Discussion

Be Accountable: Choose safety - work safe - and go home injury free!