



Driving in Poor Conditions



So, You Think You Can Drive?

So, You think you can drive in Bad Weather?

Fall and Winter driving can bring on conditions that we have not had to deal with most of the Summer. Wet, slick, icy, snowy roads provide their own set of hazards.

Winter Driving Tips

The most important thing to remember when driving on slick roads is that you must travel, steer and brake **slowly**. Any sudden application of power, brakes or steering is likely to cause a skid.

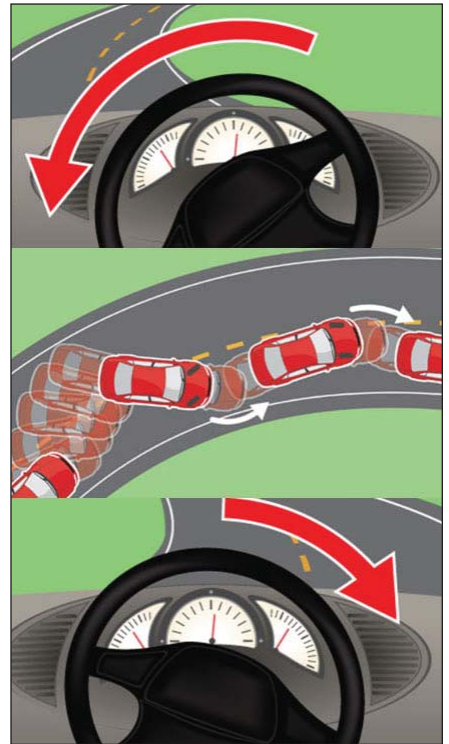
1. Be alert, look ahead of traffic. (Actions by other drivers will alert you to problems and give you extra time to react.)
2. Always look and steer where you want to go, keep your eyes on the road.
3. If your car skids, turn your wheels into the skid and when you regain control of your vehicle, accelerate slightly.
4. Plan lane changes well in advance so you can maneuver safely and give other drivers time to react.
5. Don't disrupt the flow of traffic by driving faster than everyone else.
6. Slow down early when you approach a slippery intersection, curve or hill.

7. Keep a safe stopping distance (at least 3 car lengths) between your vehicle and the one in front, and don't brake suddenly.
8. Be particularly aware of black ice conditions on surfaces such as bridge decks and entrance/exit ramps.
9. Keep tires properly inflated.
10. Drive at a speed appropriate for the weather conditions.
11. Always use your safety belt.
12. Never use cruise control in wet weather driving conditions.
13. Maintain a significant distance between you and the car in front of you. Give yourself plenty of time to stop abruptly, if necessary.
14. Use your turn signals early. Give cars behind you plenty of notice that you'll be slowing down to make a turn.

Fog

Dense fog is statistically known as the most dangerous condition to drive in because of how intensely it can impair a driver's vision of the road. The safest way to handle fog is not to drive in it, if possible. But, if you must drive, keep the following in mind:

Do NOT use your high-beam headlights! Doing so will reflect light off the fog ahead of you, making it even harder to see. Instead, turn on your regular



If you find yourself in a skid, take your feet off the pedals. Stop braking and stop accelerating. Then, quickly turn the steering wheel in the direction you want to go. As your vehicle turns back in the correct direction, you will probably then need to steer in the opposite direction to stop the turning and stay on your desired path.

headlights, or, your fog lights, if you have them.

Use the white line on the right side of the road. This will help guide you and keep you in your lane. It will also prevent your vision from being impaired by the headlights of oncoming traffic.



Dismiss the MYTHS

Before you take the wheel, rethink everything you know about driving on icy roads. Besides just battling slick roads, you may also be hindered by bad advice or common myths associated with winter driving conditions. Have you ever heard these MYTHS?

MYTH: *The heavier the vehicle is the more it will stick to the road.*

If you have a rear wheel drive vehicle, placing several sandbags at the very back of the trunk won't be of much help. If you use sandbags they should be placed over the axle.

If you have front wheel drive, don't use sandbags in the trunk. In essence, you can lose some steering and braking abilities.

The only exception is a pickup truck. Additional weight in the back actually evens out the handling of the truck.

MYTH: *Down shift to slow down.*

You have much better control with your brakes than you do down-shifting. Down-shifting makes for a momentary increase in the speed of the drive wheels which can cause them to lose grip on slippery roads.

If you have an anti-lock braking system (ABS), break steadily, do not tap your brakes. If your vehicle does not have ABS it's better to ease on the brakes or pump them to keep them from locking up.

MYTH: *It's safe to keep up with traffic.*

This is not the best advice. Stay at a speed where you feel most comfortable. Remember, speed limits are for ideal conditions and it can take a vehicle nine times longer to come to a stop in wintry conditions, so keep a safe distance (3-5 car lengths) between you and the cars in front of you.

MYTH: *It is safe to drive in standing water.*

Six inches of moving water can sweep a person off their feet. Twelve inches of moving water can take a vehicle away. So avoid any moving water. Standing water can be especially deceptive, you do not know what is beneath it, especially at night.

Tips for Driving in the Snow

- **Stay home.** Only go out if necessary. Even if you can drive well in bad weather, it's better to avoid taking unnecessary risks by venturing out.
- **Drive slowly.** Always adjust your speed down to account for lower traction when driving on snow or ice.
- **Accelerate and decelerate slowly.** Apply the gas slowly to regain traction and avoid skids. Don't try to get moving in a hurry and take time to slow down for a stoplight. Remember: It takes longer to slow down on icy roads.
- **Increase your following distance** to five to six seconds. This increased margin of safety will provide the longer distance needed if you have to stop.
- **Know your brakes.** Whether you have anti-lock brakes or not, keep the heel of your foot on the floor and use the ball of your foot to apply firm, steady pressure on the brake pedal.
- **Don't stop if you can avoid it.** There's a big difference in the amount of inertia it takes to start moving from a full stop versus how much it takes to get moving while still rolling. If you can slow down enough to keep rolling until a traffic light changes, do it.
- **Don't power up hills.** Applying extra gas on snow-covered roads will just make your wheels spin. Try to get a little inertia going before you reach the hill and let that inertia carry you to the top. As you reach the crest of the hill, reduce your speed and proceed downhill slowly.
- **Don't stop going up a hill.** There's nothing worse than trying to get moving up a hill on an icy road. Get some inertia going on a flat roadway before you take on the hill.



Check the tire pressure anytime it starts getting cold out. An under-inflated tire actually bows inward, leaving less of the all-important tread on the road.

SAFETY TRAINING SIGN-IN

Company Name: _____ Date: _____

Subject: Driving in Poor Conditions

The following employees participated in this training.

1. _____
2. _____
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