

Driving on Snow and Ice: 10 Safety Tips

McMahon Automotive Group Value Memorandum

The best tip for winter driving:

Sometimes it's best to stay home, or at least remain where you are until snow plows and sanding crews have done their work. If you must venture out, here are some snow driving tips the average driver can follow to reduce the chances of a crash.



- 1. Get a grip.** To have adequate snow traction, a tire requires at least 6/32-inch deep tread.
- 2. Make sure you can see.** Replace windshield wiper blades and clean the inside of your windows thoroughly. Make sure your windshield washer system works and is full of an anti-icing fluid.
- 3. Run the air-conditioner.** In order to remove condensation and frost from the interior of windows, engage your air-conditioner and select the fresh air option.
- 4. Check your lights.** Use your headlights so that others will see you. Make sure your headlights and taillights are clear of snow.
- 5. Give yourself a brake.** Learn how to get maximum efficiency from your brakes before an emergency. When it is safe to do so, test the brakes cautiously to determine the road traction.
- 6. Watch carefully for “black ice.”** If the road looks slick, it probably is. This is especially true with one of winter’s worst hazards: “black ice.” Test the traction with a smooth brake application or slight turn of the wheel.
- 7. Remember the tough spots.** Try to remember where icy roads tend to occur. Bridges and intersections are common places. Also: wherever water runs across the road.
- 8. Too much steering is bad.** If a slick section in a turn causes your front tires to lose grip, the common — but incorrect — reaction is to continue turning the steering wheel. If the icy conditions end and the front tires regain grip, your car will dart whichever way the wheels are pointed.
- 9. Avoid rear-tire slides.** Make sure your rear tires have at least as much tread as your front tires. Finally, if you buy winter tires, get four.
- 10. Technology offers no miracles.** All Wheel Drive can only help a vehicle accelerate or keep moving: It can't help you go around a snow-covered turn, much less stop at an icy intersection. Electronic Stability Control can prevent a spinout, but it can't clear ice from the roads or give your tires more traction. Don't let these lull you into overestimating the available traction.

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