

Emergency Supply Kit

Suggested articles you should have in your vehicle at all times. When putting together your kit, consider the area of the country in which you drive and add items accordingly.

- First-aid kit with sterile pads, aspirin, sting relief pad and instructions
- A gallon of drinking water (replace every year or when the shelf date expires)
- Spotlight/flashlight and extra batteries
- Road flares or reflective triangles
- Empty, approved gas container
- Strong rope or tow chain
- Waterproof poncho
- Swiss Army-style knife
- Fire extinguisher
- Tool kit
- Jumper cables
- Solar blanket
- Gloves
- Cell phone
- Tire repair canister



This booklet was written with assistance from the American Red Cross, the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety and the Federal Highway Administration. Because every situation is different, the individual driver must decide what to do in each particular scenario. For further information, visit our partners' websites at www.redcross.org, www.aaafoundation.org and www.fhwa.dot.gov.

The traffic safety information in this booklet is provided in cooperation with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

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#7 IN A SERIES

FOUL WEATHER DRIVING

Can you weather the worst?



Count on ShellSM



**In the United States in 1999,
about 5,000 people
were killed
and about 500,000
were injured in automobile crashes
attributed to inclement weather.
Knowing some basic safety tips could
help save your life.**

Driving in Inclement Weather

Whether it's light rain or heavy snow, high winds or extreme heat, knowing how to adjust your driving and what car safety gear to have with you can mean the difference between being safe or becoming a statistic.

Q. What should I do during bad weather?

A. Stay home and avoid driving, if possible. If you must go out, be extremely careful and drive appropriately for the conditions. Slow down. Posted speed limits are for "ideal" weather and maximum visibility. It can take twice the usual



distance to stop your vehicle on even slightly wet pavement.

- Turn on headlights to see and be seen.
- Leave plenty of extra space between you and the vehicle in front of you.
- When you leave, tell people which route you are taking and when you plan to arrive.
- Don't be overly confident with four-wheel drive. Four-wheel drive does not mean you can stop or turn more quickly.
- Slow down. This can't be stressed enough.

Driving in the Rain

Roads are slickest when it first starts to rain. Water mixes with motor oil in and on the pavement and makes roads especially slippery. If it rains long or hard enough, the mixture will wash away, but then the water itself becomes a hazard.

- Reduce your speed.
- Turn on low-beam headlights and wipers.
- Stay in the middle lanes. Water tends to pool in outside lanes.
- Do not drive through standing water, especially if you do not know how deep it is.
- Avoid swerving and abrupt braking.
- Check your mirrors more frequently and set them to minimize



blind spots. Rain on your outside mirrors and rear window can distort your view or make things harder to see.

Q. What is hydroplaning?

A. Hydroplaning occurs when a thin layer of water causes your tires to lose contact with the road. It can happen even at relatively low speeds and, in the blink of an eye, you can lose control of your car. It's frightening, but don't panic.

1. Keep both hands on the steering wheel.
2. Ease foot off the accelerator.
3. Don't slam on the brakes.
4. Without anti-lock brakes (ABS), if wheels lock-up and you begin to skid, simply release the brake pedal then gently re-apply pressure. Steer gently in the direction you want the car to go. (Check your owner's manual to see if you have ABS.)

To avoid hydroplaning, slow

down in wet weather. Be sure your tires have plenty of tread, proper inflation and consider getting “all-weather” tires that are specially designed for bad conditions.

Q. Is skidding the same as hydroplaning?

A. No. Skidding can occur on dry pavement when you brake too hard or turn too sharply. ABS can help you avoid these skids by preventing your wheels from locking when you brake. If your car is not equipped with anti-lock brakes and you begin to skid while braking:

1. Release the brake pedal then gently re-apply pressure. (In a car equipped with anti-lock brakes, press the pedal firmly and hold it.)
2. Gently steer in the direction you want the car to go; do not jerk the wheel. Be prepared to correct more than once as your car straightens out.

Q. What if the rain causes a flood or there is rushing water?

A. Always take flood warnings seriously. Do not drive through standing water and never drive through rushing water. Water may be very deep in a flooded area and undercurrents can sweep away even the heaviest vehicles.

Driving into floodwater at high speed is like hitting a wall. Watch fences, trees and buildings on the side of the road. If they

appear unnaturally low, slow down immediately. The road is probably dangerously flooded.

Q. What if my vehicle stalls in water?

A. If your vehicle stalls, abandon it and immediately seek higher ground. Six inches of rapidly moving floodwater can sweep you off your feet, and two feet of water can carry away the average car.

Fog

When it comes to inclement weather, fog is one of the most visually limiting conditions. If you get caught in heavy fog, the best thing to do is to stop well off the road until visibility is better. If there is no safe place to stop:

- Take all fog-related warning signs seriously.
- Slow down. Fog makes it very difficult to judge speed. Do not believe your eyes — glance at your speedometer to make sure you have slowed down.
- Turn on wipers, defroster and low-beam headlights. Using high beams can actually decrease your visibility.
- Moisture from fog can make roads slick, so brake smoothly.
- Crack your window and turn off the radio. Watch for slower moving cars and listen for engine sounds

or car horns.

- If the fog is too dense to continue, pull completely off the road and try to position your vehicle in a protected area from other traffic. Turn on your emergency flashers.
- Consider installing “fog lights” if you often drive in fog.

Driving in Snow and Ice

Driving in snow and ice is a serious matter, and winter storms can strand drivers for hours before help can arrive. Being prepared could save your life.

If possible, wait until plows have cleared the way. If you must drive in snow and ice, completely clear snow and ice from your vehicle before moving. Clear all windows, but don't use wipers on an icy

windshield – ice can cut the blades.

To help maintain traction as you are getting underway:

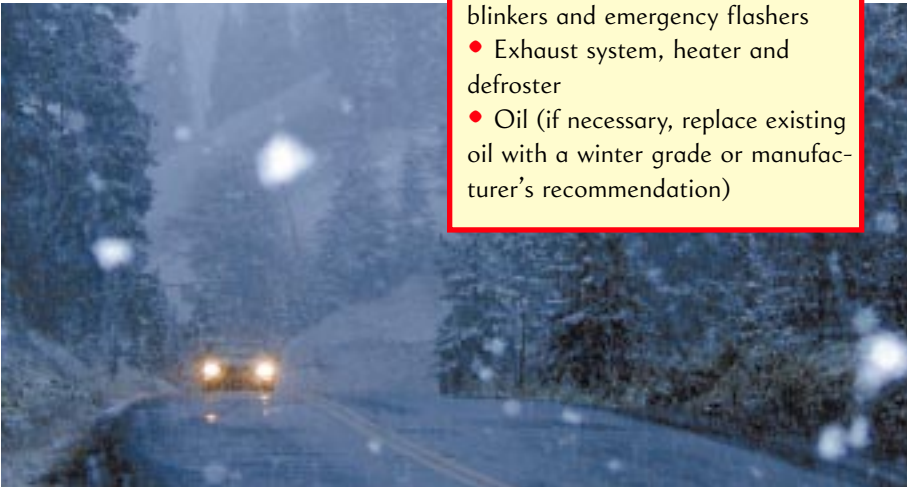
- (Automatic transmission) Put your car in “D2” and accelerate gently. Shift to “D” once you're moving.
- (Standard transmission) Use the highest gear, such as 2nd or 3rd, with which you can move the car without stalling. Accelerate gently.

Avoid spinning the wheels.

Clear an area around your tires and use an inexpensive, clay-type

Before winter arrives, check:

- Brakes and tires
- Battery and ignition system
- Antifreeze and thermostat
- Wipers and de-icing washer fluid
- Headlights, tail and brake lights, blinkers and emergency flashers
- Exhaust system, heater and defroster
- Oil (if necessary, replace existing oil with a winter grade or manufacturer's recommendation)



kitty litter to improve traction.

Stopping on snow and ice may require up to 10 times the distance as stopping in normal conditions. Keep plenty of distance between you and the vehicle in front of you. Most importantly, don't "lock up" the wheels. (ABS brakes are specifically designed to help prevent wheels from locking.)

- Slow down considerably before entering a curve or making a turn. Take your foot off the gas and let the engine slow you down. Then brake — gently.
- Don't be overly confident with a four-wheel-drive vehicle. It won't stop any faster.
- With ABS brakes, press the pedal firmly and hold it. If your car is not equipped with anti-lock brakes, when the wheels lock don't slam on the brakes, ease off the brake pedal, then gently re-apply pressure to avoid sliding as you stop.

In snow and ice, slow down; avoid sudden maneuvers. Try to keep moving and keep your wheels from spinning, no matter how slow you must go to do so. Use tire chains where allowed by law. When driving downhill, use a low gear and let the engine help you keep the car in control.

Remember that overpasses and bridges freeze before other

pavement. Even if it seems warm enough for ice to melt, it still can be hazardous.

If you begin to slide, don't slam on the brakes. Simply ease off the accelerator, then gently apply brake pressure and steer in the direction you want the car to go. Be ready to correct for a slide in the opposite direction.

Blizzard Conditions

If you become trapped during a blizzard, DO NOT leave the car unless help is visible within 100 yards. It is easy to become disoriented and lost in blowing, drifting snow and white-out conditions. If you live in an area where heavy snow is a problem, always carry a cell phone and call for help as soon as you become stuck.

Helpful hints:

- Tie a bright-colored cloth to your antenna; raise the hood.
- Start the engine; turn on the interior light and heater for about 10 minutes each hour.
- Beware of carbon monoxide poisoning. Keep the exhaust pipe clear. Slightly open a downwind window as a vent.
- Watch for signs of frostbite and hypothermia. Clap your hands and move your legs to stimulate circulation.
- Use maps, newspaper or car mats for more insulation.



Extreme Heat

Sunscreen and insect repellent are important in the summer, but so is a quick vehicle inspection before heading out to a favorite recreation spot. During hotter months, it's a good idea to keep extra coolant, at least one gallon of water, jumper cables and a flashlight in your vehicle. Also:

- Check the battery, belts and hoses.
- Check oil often.
- Have your air-conditioning system checked and serviced by a qualified technician.
- Inspect your coolant and water level and ratio to be sure it is at the proper 50/50 level when the car is cool.
- Never leave children or pets unattended in a car even for a short time. The temperature inside a closed vehicle — even with windows down — can reach dangerous levels very quickly.

- Cover metal and plastic parts on child seats and safety belts to prevent burns.

Q. What should I do if my car overheats?

A. Let engine cool and call for service. If your engine overheated because of lack of coolant, further operation may damage the vehicle.

Lightning

With or without accompanying rain, lightning can be dangerous. If you're in your car during a lightning storm, DO NOT attempt to leave the vehicle and run for cover. The car's metal cage will conduct a charge into the ground and protect you. If you're in an open vehicle, such as a convertible, golf cart, tractor, motorcycle or bicycle, find safe shelter. Do not stand under trees or in small, isolated buildings because lightning will usually strike the tallest object around. Instead, crouch down on the balls of your feet.

