

Winter Driving Tips

General winter driving tips

- * Check the weather forecast and road conditions before embarking on a trip. Check your local media, call the road condition number or go online for information on the Internet. If conditions are expected to be less than ideal, you may want to postpone a discretionary trip or use more caution if the trip cannot be delayed.
- * Always maintain a reasonable speed and safe following distance from the vehicle in front of you. Winter road conditions often result in longer stopping distances and reduced visibility.
- * Drive below the posted speed limit when road conditions are less than ideal – speed limits are intended for normal pavement conditions.
- * Turn on lights to see and be seen. Keep head and tail lights clear of snow.
- * Avoid using cruise control in winter driving conditions. You need to be in control of when your car accelerates based on road conditions – don't let the cruise control make a bad decision for you.
- * If your car is equipped with anti-lock brakes, understand how to use them and what to expect when the anti-lock feature is activated.
- * Don't drive through "white out" conditions. Be patient, wait it out and travel safely.
- * Be aware that ramps, bridges and overpasses may occasionally freeze before other roadway segments.

Winter driving tips when meeting or overtaking a snowplow

- * When overtaking a snowplow, be aware that snowplows often travel only 5-35 mph. When you spot a snowplow ahead, slow down to allow for any difference in speed.
- * Snowplows may need to stop or take evasive action to avoid stranded vehicles. Maintain a safe following distance and be prepared to stop, if necessary.
- * Be cautious if you see an area of blowing snow – it could conceal a snowplow.
- * If you must pass a snowplow, be sure that you have clear vision ahead before passing. Allow plenty of room when passing a snowplow, and don't cut in too quickly. The blade extends several feet in front of the truck. On two lane roads, operators will pull over periodically to let following vehicles pass.
- * On multi-lane roads, watch for plows operating in the left lane or in tandem.
- * Don't travel beside a snowplow. When encountering a large drift or packed snow, the impact can move the truck sideways.
- * Don't attempt to pass a snowplow when visibility is severely reduced.
- * Never pass a snowplow on the right. Many snowplows are equipped with a blade that extends to the right. This "wing blade" may be hidden by snow and difficult to see.
- * Move as far away from the centerline of the pavement as you safely can when meeting a snowplow on a two-lane road.
- * When two or more snowplows are working together to clear a multi-lane road, do not attempt to pass.

Travel Preparedness

- * Before winter strikes, make sure your vehicle is in good working order. Tires should be in good condition for maximum traction. Pack a winter survival kit to keep in your vehicle.
- * Keep your windshield washer full and have good wiper blades so that you can keep the windshield clear.

Winter Road Conditions

Iowa	511
(If calling from out of state or from a phone system not participating in the 511 program, call 800-288-1047)	
Illinois	800-452-4368
Minnesota.....	800-542-0220
Missouri.....	800-222-6400
Nebraska	402-471-4533
South Dakota	866-697-3511
Wisconsin	800-762-3947

Web Sites

www.dotweatherview.com
Iowa weather conditions
www.511ia.org or
www.iowaroadconditions.org
Iowa's Road Condition Report
(brought to you by the Iowa Department of Public Safety and the Iowa Department of Transportation)
www.dot.state.ia.us
Iowa Department of Transportation
<http://iwin.nws.noaa.gov/iwin/ia/ia.html>
National Weather Service for Iowa

Winter Survival Kit

Booster cables	Extra clothing - cap, mittens, parka, and overshoes	Sand or strips of carpet for traction
Blankets and/or sleeping bags	High-calorie, nonperishable food, like candy and canned nuts	Flashlight and extra batteries
Candles and matches		First-aid kit
Snow shovel and ice scraper		Bottled water