



US Army Reserve Safety Awareness



Winter Driving Tips

Severe weather can be both frightening and dangerous for travelers. According to AAA, winter storms, bad weather, and sloppy road conditions are a factor in nearly half a million crashes and more than 2,000 road deaths every winter.

Cold Weather Driving Tips

- Keep your car stocked with food, water, warm clothing, a flashlight, a glass scraper, blankets, medications, and more.
- Make certain your tires are properly inflated and have plenty of tread.
- Never warm up a vehicle in an enclosed area.
- Keep at least half a tank of fuel in your vehicle at all times.
- Do not use cruise control when driving on any slippery surface (ice and snow).

Tips for Driving in the Snow

- **Stay home.** Only go out if necessary.
- **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. Remember: It takes longer to slow down on icy roads.
- **Increase your following distance.** This increased margin of safety will provide the longer distance needed if you have to stop.

Tips for Long-Distance Winter Trips

- **Be Prepared:** Have your vehicle checked by auto repair facility before hitting the road.
- **Check the Weather:** Check the weather along your route and when possible, delay your trip if bad weather is expected.
- **Increase your following distance.** This increased margin of safety will provide the longer distance needed if you have to stop.

If you get stuck in the snow:

- **Stay with your vehicle:** Your vehicle provides temporary shelter and makes it easier for rescuers to locate you.
- **Don't over exert yourself:** When digging out your vehicle, listen to your body and stop if you become tired.
- **Be Visible:** Tie a brightly colored cloth to the antenna of your vehicle or place a cloth at the top of a rolled up window to signal distress.
- **Clear the Exhaust Pipe:** Make sure the exhaust pipe is not clogged with snow, ice or mud. A blocked exhaust pipe can cause deadly carbon monoxide gas to leak into the passenger compartment.
- **Stay Warm:** Use whatever is available to insulate your body from the cold. This could include floor mats, newspapers or paper maps. Pre-pack blankets and heavy clothing to use in case of an emergency.
- **Conserve Fuel:** If possible, only run the engine and heater long enough to remove the chill.