



Short Safety Subject

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www.bragg.army.mil/psbc-bm/PubsAndForms/ShortSafetySubjects.htm

Winter Driving, Are You Ready?



Winter driving can be inconvenient, annoying, even infuriating. But you can offset those aggravations and minimize the special risks of winter driving. The main thing is to give yourself plenty of time to get to where you are going. Visibility is another big hazard of winter driving. In heavy snow, keep your lights on **LOW BEAM**. Stop and clean your windshield and lights if necessary. Get off the road before you get stranded by worsening weather conditions.

Getting started: Here are some routine precautions to help you avoid starting problems:

- Get an engine tune-up in the fall.
- Switch to winter-weight oil if you aren't already using all-season oil.
- Be sure all lights are in good working order.
- Have the brakes adjusted.
- Battery and voltage regulator should be checked.
- Make sure battery connections are good.
- If the battery terminal posts seem to be building up a layer of corrosion, clean them with a paste of baking soda and water. Let it foam, and then rinse with water. Apply a thin film of petroleum jelly to the terminal posts to prevent corrosion, and reconnect.
- Be sure all fluids are at proper levels. Antifreeze should not only be strong enough to prevent freezing, but fresh enough to prevent rust. Make sure wiper blades are cleaning properly. Consider changing to winter wiper blades, which are made for driving in snow. They are covered with a rubber boot to keep moisture away from working parts of the blade. Don't idle a cold vehicle's engine for along time to warm it up - it could harm the engine. The right way to warm up a vehicle is to drive it.

Equipment and supplies: Here's what you'll want to have on hand, especially in an emergency:

- Snow shovel.
- Scraper with a brush on one end. Tow chain or strap.
- Tire chains.
- Flashlight (with extra batteries)
- Abrasive material (cat litter, sand, salt, or traction mats).
- Jumper cables.
- Warning device (flares or reflective triangles).
- Brightly colored cloth to signal for help.
- Empty coffee or similar type can containing candles, matches (in a watertight container) or a lighter, high-energy food (dried fruit, for example).