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Brilliant Safety Tips for Driving in Bad Weather Conditions

Our Friends · Thursday, February 6th, 2020

In extreme weather, you're most vulnerable inside your vehicle than anywhere else. It's therefore prudent that you drive safely in such weather conditions. Also, you need to keep your car in the best conditions. Regardless of your driving experience, driving in foggy weather, snow, rain, standing water, moving floods, or extremely hot weather can be challenging.

Regardless of the weather condition you're driving in, always remember the simple rule of thumb: Never go quicker than what's safe for the current state of the road.

Fog

Of all extreme weather conditions, driving in foggy weather is probably the most challenging and the most dangerous. Dense mist can actually reduce your visibility to a third of a mile or even less. That means you're unaware of what's happening in front of your car. If it's possible, avoid driving in dense mist if you can, but be sure to follow the safety tips below if you must drive.

1. Never use your high beams.

Contrary to what many drivers think, using your high beams in mist doesn't increase your visibility. It actually makes it worse. Bright light reflects off the fog creating a 'white effect,' which makes it impossible to see in front of your car.

2. Roll your window down a little.

Since you can barely see what's happening in front of your car when driving in the mist, hearing what's happening outside can help you. Roll down the driver's window slightly. This way, you can tell where other vehicles are in relation to you, and the audible cue will make your trip smoother and easier.

3. Reduce speed.

Well, it's pretty obvious that you can't drive at the same speed in foggy weather as you can on a clear day. Slow down, and be sure to keep enough distance between you and the car in front. Fog can play tricks on your eyes, and it may seem like you're driving slower than you really are. Keep checking the speedometer to know how fast you're going.

4. Let the road be your guide.

You see, in foggy weather, you're highly likely to use the car in front of you as your guide. Don't be tempted. They may decide to swerve or slam on their brakes unexpectedly, which can be dangerous. Use roadside reflectors or the road's right edge if you need a guide.

5. Try to stay put.

Sometimes, you may be in a hurry, and everybody is driving slowly. It can be frustrating, but try to stay put and maintain your lane as long as possible. Avoid overtaking or changing lanes in foggy weather. It's never a good idea.

6. Turn off the lights in case you pull over.

In case you decide to get off the road, turn off your lights. The drivers behind you may assume you're in a moving lane if you leave your tail lights on. Turn them off to avoid possible collisions.

Snow

Snow is best enjoyed indoors, but not when driving on the road. If you can, don't drive in the snow, but if you must, now, what? Follow these driving tips for a safe and smooth trip.

1. Prepare in advance.

Don't wait until it's snowing to start prepping your car. Get it ready for the harsh winter weather conditions in advance, so you don't have to start scrambling at the last minute. In case your area snows a lot, consider buying snow tires. Alternatively, you can purchase snow chains and apply them to your tires if needed.

You should also ensure you have a winter emergency kit in your car. It should include the following items:

- Ice scraper
- Booster cables
- Car litter to give your vehicle traction when you get stuck
- Snow shovel
- Flares
- Blanket
- Water

2. Slow down.

It goes without saying. Driving on a slippery or slushy road can be extremely dangerous. Slow down. Give yourself adequate time to get to your destination if you must drive in the snow.

3. Increase the following distance.

Going slow shouldn't be an excuse to trail the car in front of you closely. Remember the three seconds rule? That's for a clear and dry road. Make it at least eight seconds when **driving** in the snow. Observe the vehicle in front of you pass a stationary object – it could be a sign, building, or a crosswalk. If you pass that object before the 8 seconds elapse, you're driving too close.

4. Keep your headlights on.

Turn your headlights on when driving in the snow. Apart from improving your visibility, it allows other drivers to see you. Remember to keep the headlights clean, so you can make the most out of them.

5. Ensure the gas tank is at least half full.

During winter, ensure you drive with plenty of gas. Fill your tank if you can. Otherwise, ensure it's at least half full. It prevents the gas line from freezing. In any case, it's always wise to have plenty of gas in the car. It wouldn't be a pleasant experience to get stranded somewhere in the snow.

6. Don't slam on your brakes.

You can expect to skid at some point when driving in the snow. Your car slides away from the direction you're heading. In such a situation, the natural reaction would be to slam the brakes. Unfortunately, slamming the brakes only makes matters worse. The tires lose traction, making it even harder to control the vehicle.

Even big skids can be controlled, but don't stab the brakes. Ease off the gas when your car starts to slide. The car slows down, which allows the wheels to gain traction.

Note: This doesn't mean that brakes aren't important when driving in the snow. Brakes are extremely important whenever you're driving, irrespective of the weather conditions. Make sure your car brakes are in good working condition and replace them if necessary. Check out excellent brake parts from <https://shop.revologycars.com/collections/coyote-swap-braking-systems>.

Rain

Wet roads are dangerous, whether it's raining or not. It's even worse when it's raining because the roads aren't only wet, but your visibility also decreases. Follow the tips for safe driving in the rain.

1. Keep your headlights on.

Day or night, you should keep your headlights on. This increases visibility. In fact, it's a requirement in several states to keep headlights on when it's raining or when visibility has shrunk to 1000 feet.

2. New tires, excellent brakes, and wipers

Threadbare tires are dangerous on wet roads. Your traction should be at the optimal level when driving in the rain. If possible, have new tires or relatively new tires with deep threads. Alternatively, you can buy all-weather tires. It helps in case you hydroplane. Your brakes should be in excellent condition if you're driving in the rain. Let a mechanic inspect your brakes regularly.

Windshield wipers can be your best friend when driving in the rain. However, they shouldn't be old and dull. Otherwise, they will limit your visibility, increasing your chances of getting into an accident.

In case you slide, just ease off the accelerator and don't slam on the brakes.

3. Never use cruise control.

Wet roads require full attention. Your hands should be on the wheel, your eyes on the road, and legs ready for action. In case you skid, cruise control can lead to losing control of the vehicle. Also, when you slide, there's no traction. This can cause the cruise control to increase speed.

4. Drive smarter.

Always change your driving strategy according to the surrounding conditions. When driving in the rain:

- Keep enough distance.
- Slow down.
- Never tailgate, especially when you can barely see in front of your car.
- Be patient. There will always be extra traffic when it rains.

Dealing with water on the road

Never drive on flooded roadways. In case you notice flood waters ahead, turn around. However, sometimes, extreme weather can put you in a dangerous situation fast. In case you find yourself driving through water, follow these tips:

- Drive at the center of the road. Water is shallowest at the center of the road.
- Don't try to cross water that rises above the center of your wheels.
- Drive slowly.
- Drive with low gears.

Heat

Driving in hot weather is normally not a problem. But then, did you know that driving in extreme heat can take a toll on your car? Follow these tips to keep your car out of trouble if you intend to drive in extremely hot weather, especially if you're going on a long journey.

- Check your fluids – brake fluid, power-steering fluid, coolant, transmission fluid, motor oil, and windshield wiper fluid.
- Monitor tire pressure.
- Replace your battery if it's too old.
- Have a mechanic inspect your vehicle's belts and hoses.
- Always carry a summer emergency kit.

Photo: [unsplash-logoSamuele Errico Piccarini](#)

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