

## Driving in Snow? Go Nice and Slow!



When staying home is not an option and you must brave winter roads, your **Trusted Choice® independent insurance agent** advises you to remember the ageless moral of the tortoise and hare: Slow and easy wins the race.

From snow blizzards and white-outs to the dreaded black ice, the hazards of winter roadways must be negotiated carefully if you and your vehicle are to arrive at your destination safely. Even with the use of de-icing agents and sand, your chances of slip, sliding away into a ditch, barrier or other car are great. Beyond keeping your vehicle in top winterized condition, caution is the rule of the winter road.

Here are a few helpful winter safe driving tips direct from the experts at AAA:

- **Accelerate and decelerate slowly.** To regain traction and avoid skids, apply the gas slowly. And remember that it takes longer to slow down on icy roads, so allow extra time to brake before a stop.
- **Drive slowly.** Everything takes longer on snow-covered roads, including accelerating, stopping, and turning. Allow extra driving time. Driving slowly also gives you time to maneuver.
- **The safest following distance on normal dry pavement is three to four seconds.** On ice or snow, allow eight to 10 seconds of following time. You need the increased margin of safety in order to provide the longer stopping distances required on ice and snow.
- **Know your brakes.** Threshold braking is the best way to stop, regardless of the type of brakes on your vehicle. Keep the heel of your foot on the floor and use the ball of your foot to apply firm, steady pressure on the brake pedal. If a wheel locks, release the brake and reapply.
- **Don't stop if you can avoid it.** On slippery roads, it's much easier to accelerate while the car is still rolling than to start moving from a full stop. If you can slow down enough to keep rolling until a traffic light changes, do it.
- **Don't power up hills.** Applying extra gas on a slippery hill will cause your wheels to spin. Increase speed before you reach the hill, and let

### Winter Roads Nothing to Sing About

*Folks may sing, "Let it snow, let it snow, let it snow!" but drivers are safer when the sun is shining, the roads are dry, and they're only dreaming of snow along with Bing Crosby in the holiday classic, "White Christmas."*

*According to the Federal Highway Administration, weather-related accidents cause most injuries and fatalities on our highways, with snow and icy conditions a significant contributor:*

- More than 70% of our roads are located in snowy regions (more than five inches of snow annually).
- Nearly 70% of the U.S. population lives in these areas.
- Snowy or slushy pavement leads to an average 30% to 40% reduction in vehicle speed, decreased visibility, reduced road capacity and increased travel time delay.
- Nearly a quarter of weather-related accidents (24%) occur on snowy, slushy or icy pavement, resulting in more than 1,300 fatalities and 116,800 injuries.
- Of those accidents, 15% occur during snowfall and sleet, resulting in nearly 900 fatalities and nearly 76,000 injuries.

that energy carry you to the top. If possible, allow the car in front of you to crest a steep incline before attempting it yourself.

- **Never stop while going up a hill.** Starting from a full stop on a hill can be impossible. As you reach the crest of the hill, reduce your speed and proceed downhill as slowly as possible.

If you can, stay home and watch the snow from indoors. Even if you drive well in the snow, others on the road may not.

#### Sources:

<http://exchange.aaa.com/safety/roadway-safety/winter-driving-tips/>  
<http://exchange.aaa.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/How-To-Go-On-Ice-and-Snow.pdf>  
[http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/weather/weather\\_events/snow\\_ice.htm](http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/weather/weather_events/snow_ice.htm)  
<http://www.drivingfast.net/track/threshold-braking.htm#.UM5NAXfWbyY>

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