



Nova Scotia RCMP

Nova Scotia RCMP Top Ten Tips for Safe Winter Driving

1. Pre-trip preparations

There are steps motorists can take to reduce the likelihood of being involved in a collision during winter weather. The first starts before even getting into the car. Take the time to brush the snow from all of the windows, side mirrors, headlights and tail lights. We've all seen those motorists who only clear a small area on the front windshield and then start driving. This is dangerous for them, for everyone else on the road, and it's something police will issue a ticket for if they see it. It's also important to clear the snow from the hood and the roof. If not, there is a very real chance it will blow off on the highway and create hazardous conditions for anyone travelling behind.

2. Plan ahead

Before heading out, check to see what the current road conditions are and what type of weather you should expect. In Nova Scotia, motorists can call 511 for a list of current road conditions, or they can find them online at [www.http://511.gov.ns.ca/map/](http://511.gov.ns.ca/map/) through the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. Motorists are also advised to make sure someone is aware of their travel plans, especially during times of inclement weather.

3. Drive according to road conditions

If the roads are slippery it will take more time and distance to stop.

The simplest solution is to slow down. It is also important to leave a safe amount of distance between vehicles, especially on the highway. That way, in the event of an emergency stop, there will be more time to do so. Anyone who has ever been in a collision knows that one or two seconds makes a huge difference.

4. Know the limits of your vehicle

Many times, motorists driving four-wheel drive or all-wheel drive vehicles feel safer because of the improved traction and additional ground clearance. It's important to keep in mind that stopping ability is not improved. Four and all-wheel drive vehicles can reduce your chances of getting stuck, but they won't help you stop any better during slippery conditions.

5. Weigh the importance of the trip against the current weather conditions

When the weather is really bad, police often advise motorists to avoid traveling if possible.

6. Tires

When it comes to winter driving, good winter tires are one of the most important investments a motorist can make. The rubber used to make winter tires is specially designed for cold conditions. It's softer, which allows the tires to maintain better contact with the road. As well, the treads are designed to grip the road better by displacing slush and snow. It's also worth noting that all-season

tires are not the same as winter tires.

7. Buckle up.

A seatbelt will help keep you in your seat if the car does slip on the roadways, and it will help protect you at the moment of impact.

8. Cell phone

Another safety device to take with you is a cell phone. This does not mean texting or talking while driving, but if you do get into trouble, a cell phone is an important tool to have with you.

9. Winter Safety Kit

A winter emergency kit for your vehicle should include a cell phone, flash light and batteries, emergency food, bottled water, candles, blankets, booster cables, sand or kitty litter for traction, tow cables, and road maps.

10. Vehicle Maintenance

Ensure your windshield wiper fluid is a winter variety that will not freeze, and keep it topped up. Take the time to make sure the car is running properly. Oil changes and regular servicing are important for both vehicle maintenance and vehicle safety. Have a mechanic check on the condition of the battery. If it's old, have it replaced. And finally, keep the gas tank topped up.

Contact Information

Nova Scotia RCMP
Non-emergency number:
1-800-803-7267

