FALL/WINTER AUTOMOTIVE CARE GUIDE

DRIVING AT NIGHT WINTER VEHICLE KIT DEFENSIVE DRIVING



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Fall/Winter 2024-25 AUTOMOTIVE CARE GUIDE Pag

Why regular car washes are important

Taking care of a vehicle involves more than just maintaining the equipment under the hood.

There are a number of steps involved in keeping a car or truck in top form, and that includes regular car washes - especially those exposed to winter conditions.

Car washes keep a vehicle shiny and clean, which can help it look good while sitting in the driveway or cruising the highway. However, regular car washes are more than cosmetic.

They can help provide the following for vehicles.

Extend the life of paint

Dirt and debris can build up on the paint surface and eventually lead to scratches and other damage. Bird droppings and sap can be corrosive.

Washing will help remove grime and protect the paint in the process.

Preserve the vehicle's value

Drivers who plan to sell or trade in their vehicles in the future should realize that a well-maintained car can bring in as much as 20 percent more for above-average condition, according to Kelley Blue Book. Maintaining a clean and shiny vehicle can protect its long-term value.

Remove salt

Drivers who live near in areas where roads are salted in the winter to melt snow may have cars with high salt corrosion rates.

Unless it's washed off frequently, salt can take its toll, leading to damage.



Car washes keep a vehicle shiny and clean, which can help it look good while sitting in the driveway or cruising the highway. But in areas exposed to snow, removing salt with a car wash can help protect the paint and prolong the life of the vehicle.

Protection from the sun

A car that is routinely and properly washed and waxed is less vulnerable to damage from the sun's ultraviolet rays.

Improve fuel efficiency

Drivers have felt pain in their wallets at the fuel pump in recent years. Dirty cars

may be less aerodynamic and less fuelefficient as a result. Keeping a car clean may improve its fuel efficiency.

Maintain the interior

Car washes are not only about the exterior. Keeping a clean and tidy interior can help improve the air quality inside of the vehicle and prolong the life of upholstery, mats and interior components. In summary, car washes should be

a routine part of vehicle maintenance. Professional car washes tend to be more eco-friendly than washing a car at home, so drivers are urged investigate their service plans and features.

(METRO CREATIVE)

TIPS FOR DRIVING AT NIGHT

Fewer daylight hours in fall and winter mean more time in the dark

Driving requires drivers to use their senses so they, their passengers, and their fellow motorists can safely traverse the roadways. When any of those senses are compromised, the risk for accident increases.

Sight is vital to safe driving. Individuals who have vision problems must correct these issues by wearing eyeglasses or contact lenses to stay safe behind the wheel.

But sometimes the condition affecting vision is nighttime.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration says that accidents happen in greater frequency at night, when the passenger vehicle occupant fatality rate is around three times higher than the daytime rate. That's despite the fact that there are far fewer cars on the road at night than during the daytime.

Reduced visibility and drowsiness behind the wheel after the sun goes down may cause many people to avoid driving at night.

But driving at night isn't always avoidable, especially during the months when the sun sets early. In the fall and winter months, with fewer daylight hours, drivers are often spending more time on the road in the dark, in the morning as well as at night.

When forced to drive at night, drivers can follow these tips to make it safer and easier.

Get enough rest

Skip the road trip if you are feeling tired or if you have taken medication that can cause drowsiness.

Improve headlight visibility

Make sure headlights are in good working order and that the plastic covering on the headlights is not cloudy, which can adversely affect light output.

The angle of the lamp also is a factor. Some headlights may need a periodic angle adjustment.

Clean your windshield

A dirty windshield can cause additional glare and also make it challenging to see the road.

Slow down and pay attention

It can be difficult to see pedestrians and animals at night. Deer often are struck at dusk or overnight, particularly between the months of October and January.

Get an eye exam

Age-related vision changes can compromise vision and perception of glare.

Speak with an eye professional about which coatings can be applied to glasses to help with glare and if any tweaks to prescriptions need to be made.

Nighttime driving requires a few different strategies to make it safer and more comfortable to drive after the sun sets.

Stick to multi-lane roads

Today's vehicles are typically equipped with LED lights rather than halogen or incandescent bulbs. A study in the SAE International Journal of Passenger

On the

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Cars found that these LED lamps were "generally perceived to be brighter than a standard incandescent lamp."

Although these lamps may help drivers see in front of them while driving, oncoming drivers often claim they are blinded.

Oncoming lights can be particularly intense on a two-lane road. On a multi-lane road, you can put yourself at a distance from oncoming cars and switch lanes if need be.

(METRO CREATIVE)





Defensive driving beidesteen beid

Driving affords people the freedom to travel wherever they desire so long as they have access to a reliable vehicle. However, soon after the "new car

smell" of that freshly minted license wears off, motorists may realize that many roads can be chaotic and populated by erratic drivers.

Defensive driving strategies can help any motorist feel safe on the road, and it can help anyone to revisit a defensive approach from time to time.

What is defensive driving?

The insurance firm Progressive notes defensive drivers employ techniques that can reduce accident risk. These techniques promote alertness, a recognition among drivers of the significance of controlling what they can, and a commitment to always expect the unexpected.

The crux of defensive driving is realizing not everyone else drives well. Aggressive drivers are hazards, as are those who are distracted behind the wheel. Driving defensively serves to mitigate some of these hazards.

All good kids like milk?

There are various defensive driving techniques, and various driving schools or organizations may promote their own. Harold L. Smith was a World War II veteran who founded the Smith System driving school in 1952. Smith felt that

driving school in 1952. Smith felt that driving schools only taught how to mechanically operate vehicles, not how to drive safely to avoid accidents.

Smith's system uses the mnemonic "all good kids like milk," which refers to:

• Aim high in steering: Look ahead a

minimum of 15 seconds to scan the road. At 60 miles per hour you want to look a quarter-mile ahead. This helps you make timely decisions.

• Get the big picture: Keep a minimum following distance by picking a fixed object ahead and making sure you're at least seven seconds away. In addition, scan mirrors every few seconds.

• Keep your eyes moving: Avoid focusing on one object for more than a few seconds. Driving on autopilot or under "highway hypnosis" is dangerous.

• Leave yourself an out: The "space cushion" terminology is something you may have heard. You always want to anticipate potential hazards and ensure a way to avoid them; otherwise, you may be forced to make a quick, and potentially dangerous, decision.

• Make sure they see you: Drivers who can't see you may make their own maneuvers thinking the coast is clear. Try to make eye contact with other drivers, use headlights, your horn, and signal your intentions.

Take a defensive driving course

Defensive driving strategies can help motorists feel safe on the road, It's also recommended drivers revisit a defensive approach from time to time.

You can follow the Smith method outlined here or enroll in a defensive driving course to further hone your skills behind the wheel.

Also, it may be worth it to check with your insurance provider to see if taking a defensive driving course will qualify you for a discount on your automotive policy.

Defensive driving is important, as it can keep drivers and their passengers safe and potentially prevent accidents and injuries. (METRO CREATIVE)

MAKE HOLIDAY ROAD TRIPS SAFE AND STRESS-FREE

We're nearing the time of year when families are once again planning to get together for the upcoming holiday season. Many people will head home for the holidays, and the vast majority will take to the highway to do so.

The U.S. Bureau of Transportation Statistics says the Thanksgiving and Christmas/New Year's holiday periods are among the busiest for long-distance travel. The highways are expected to again be busy, with many motorists traveling to some distance to visit loved ones.

Holiday travel may require covering many miles in a limited amount of time. Finding ways to be efficient in regard to time management can reduce stress and improve safety.

Travel at night

If you can safely manage it, you may experience considerably less traffic in the evening hours than during other times of day. In addition, if kids are in tow, they may sleep much of the way, helping to reduce the number of times they ask, "Are we there yet?" Share driving responsibilities with another person so that each driver can take a break to prevent drowsy driving.

Get a vehicle maintenance check

No one wants to get stranded on the side of the road with a car filled with gifts and treats. It's well worth the investment to have a mechanic give a vehicle a checkup prior to leaving. Get an oil change even if it's a little early to do so.

Look at tire tread wear and ensure that you have the right tires for the road conditions where you'll be headed.

Plan your route

People often rely on mobile phone or dashboard GPS systems to get where they need to go. However, it helps to have a general idea of the route so that if service drops out you can still find your way. Scout out rest stops or acceptable restaurants online prior to leaving so you have a plan for making stops in safe areas.

Stock the car

While presents may be taking up valuable real estate, pack a cooler with snacks and beverages to help reduce how many times you need to get off the highway.

Slow down in inclement weather

Travelers United, a nonprofit organization that represents all travelers, also warns that quick storms that pop up after a long dry spell can immediately make road surfaces extremely slippery. Driver are reminded to use caution regardless of the conditions but especially in the event of slippery roads.

The holiday meal can be reheated if you're late, so don't feel compelled to speed or drive erratically when the weather is stormy. (METRO CREATIVE)

Build a winter voice Automotive care guide Page Build a winter voice build by the second supplies and supplies

We never want to think about it, but roadside emergencies happen to all of us, experts at AAA remind us. And since it's always better to be prepared, consider building or purchasing a roadside emergency kit (if you don't have one already) to have on-hand when a problem arises.

These kits are suitable for any time of year. Winter, however, is particularly taxing on cars and their passengers. Therefore, you should consider supplementing your roadside kit in the winter with some cold-weather tools and supplies to keep you safe and secure.

Year-round essentials

There are a handful of items you should always keep on-hand for driving emergencies, regardless of the season. These include:

- First aid kit with extra medication.
- Jumper cables or jump pack.
- Portable air compressor.
- Extra cell phone charger.
- Flashlight.
- Jack lug-wrench and a spare tire.
- Non-perishable food and water.
- Road flares or reflective triangles.
- Toolkit.

Driving kit additions

Shovel, long-handled snow brush or broom, and ice scraper

Digging your car out of the snow and clearing the powdery stuff off your vehicle are two of the most common labors that come with winter driving. You'll need at least three tools in your winter driving emergency kit to effectively get the job done.

A shovel can keep clear a path around the car, as well as in front of and behind all four tires. Collapsible shovels are available for easy storage.

A long-handled snow brush or broom should be used to remove snow from the vehicle itself.

Finally, an ice scraper is the tool to clear your windshield and windows when the winter weather has frozen over.

Once you have the tools, learn the proper way to dig your car out from the snow.

PACKING AN EMERGENCY KIT

40% of American drivers do not carry an emergency kit in their vehicle.

Always keep an emergency kit handy and in winter, make sure to include:

First-aid kit

- 2 Flashlight with extra batteries
- 3 Rags, paper towels or pre-moistened wipes
- Drinking water/snacks for everyone in the car (including pets)
- 5 Warm gloves, clothes, hats and blankets
- 6 Basic toolkit including duct tape and warning
- devices (such as flares or reflective triangles)
- 7 Ice scraper/snow brush
- 8 Jumper cables/jump pack
- Traction aids (sand/salt/non-clumping cat litter)
- 10 Mobile phone and car charger
- Winter windshield washer solvent
- 12 Tarp, raincoat and gloves
- 13 Shovel

NewsRoom.AAA.com

Kitty litter or sand

If you're stuck in a slippery patch of snow and ice, kitty litter and/or sand will be your best friend.

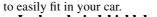
These substances help improve traction, allowing your tires to grip the road and propel the vehicle forward.

Camping blanket

Staying warm will be one of your main priorities – and obstacles – if you're in a winter roadside emergency. A blanket can go a long way in this situation.

Your best bet is to look for a campingstyle blanket that can be packed up tightly





Lock and windshield de-icer You can't drive your car if you can't get

inside. Your locks can easily freeze shut if any type of precipitation is followed by plunging temperatures.

De-icers can help thaw the lock and windshield quickly and get you on your way in no time.

Rain poncho

Wearing wet clothes in cold weather can cause hypothermia. For only a few dollars, a simple poncho can protect you and your clothes from the rain and snow.

Plus, it can fold up inside a compact package to easily store in your winter driving kit.

Hand and feet warmers

For an extra layer of protection, stock up on hand and feet warmers.

Boots, gloves, hats

You may be best off keeping an entire extra set of warm clothes in your car.

But if you have to narrow it down, make sure to have warm, dry sets of boots and gloves on hand, as well as a winter hat.

Your hands and feet are most likely to come in contact with the snow. Plus, extremities are often the first body parts to feel the effects of cold weather, so making sure these body parts are protected and well-insulated is vital.

As for your head, heat escapes from

WINTER SAFETY GUIDE 🎆



AAA GRAPHIC Car Care

every area of your body, so keeping your noggin uncovered is a mistake.

Extra windshield wiper and fluid

Winter weather is particularly taxing on your vehicle. The onslaught of rain, snow, sleet, and ice means your wipers will be working overtime. But this weather can also cause wipers to break.

Keeping your windshield clear is paramount in safely operating a vehicle, so you don't want to be stranded without effective wipers (or enough wiper fluid).

Pro tip: When replacing your wipers as part of regular car maintenance, save the old wipers for emergencies.

Sports drinks

We know that it's always a good idea to have extra water in your vehicle. In the winter months, however, you may want to supplement your hydration supply with sports drinks, which typically freeze at a lower temperature than water.

Additional warning devices (flares and reflective triangles)

Warning devices should be part of your year-round roadside kit, but you're more likely to use them in the colder months.

The sun sets earlier during the winter, increasing the odds that it will be dark outside while you're dealing with your emergency.

Being stuck on the side of the road in the dark without any (or enough) warning devices can be very dangerous.

Emergency vehicle kits are suitable for any time of year. Winter, however, is particularly taxing therefore, you should consider supplementing your roadside kit in the winter with cold-weather tools and supplies as an additional way to keep you safe and secure.

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Page 6 AUTOMOTIVE CARE GUIDE Fall/Winter 2024-25

Winter maintenance list KEEP YOUR VEHICLE IN EDICID WEAT UP FRIGID WEATHER

Consumer Reports recommends keeping a list of car-care tips in mind as the mercury plummets.

You don't want to be stranded by a dead battery or get into an accident because you can't see out your windows. If you haven't taken some of these preventive-care steps, do them as soon as you can so you're prepared for the next big chill.

Keep the battery in good shape

Your vehicle's battery is hit especially hard when the mercury plummets. Cold temperatures reduce its cranking power. In fact, at about 0° F, a battery has only about half the power it has at 80° F.

To check a conventional battery, remove the plastic caps on the top and check the fluid level. (See your owner's manual.) If the fluid is low, add distilled water.

On maintenance-free batteries, check that the window at the top of the battery indicates a fully charged state. If it's more than five years old and shows signs of weakness, replace the battery with a top-rated model.

You can also have the battery professionally tested at a service station, auto parts store, or repair shop. A tired battery may just need to be charged. But if it's defective or just worn out, it's best to replace it before it goes completely dead.

Replace the wiper blades

You have to replace wiper blades more often than you might think. Tests by Consumer Reports have found that even the best-performing wiper blades start to lose their effectiveness in as little as six months. Streaks or missed expanses of glass are sure signs that the blades are ready for retirement.

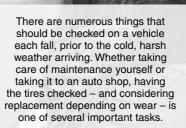
While it's possible to stretch their life by cleaning the rubber edge of the blade periodically with a paper towel and glass cleaner, it isn't safe to do that all winter long. Instead, get yourself new blades.

It's recommended wiper blades are replaced as often as twice per year. Most wiper blades are easy to install, and some auto parts stores will perform the replacement work free of charge.

Clear the windows

If you can't see out the windows, you're a danger to yourself and everyone around. Don't try to use the wipers and those brandnew wiper blades to remove ice from the windshield. Instead, use an ice scraper on frosty mornings.

If you park outside, place the wipers in the raised position when it's going to snow





overnight to keep them from freezing to the windshield.

With dirt, mud, and salt residue being kicked up off the road, it's likely that you'll be using your windshield washers a lot, so keep your windshield-washer reservoir filled with a winter-blend washer solution that contains an antifreeze agent.

Also make sure the heater is functioning properly and that plenty of warm air is being directed to the windshield when it's in the defrost mode.

To help prevent your windshield from fogging up, run the air-conditioning system (with the temperature set at a comfortable level) to dehumidify the air.

STOCK PHOTO Car Care

Finally, check that all the vehicle's lights are working properly and that the lenses are clean, so that you'll have optimum visibility at night and motorists front and rear will be able to see you.

Check the oil

Cold weather can beat up your engine, too. Motor oil thickens when cold, making it harder for the engine to turn over. Check your owner's manual for the manufacturer's recommendation.

Generally, you should be using multiviscosity oil that has a "W" in the viscosity index, signifying that it's formulated for winter use. Typical formulas that are recommended for modern engines include 5W-20, 5W-30, and 10W-30, which provide good oil flow at low temperatures and can often be used year-round.

Whenever you have the oil changed, replace the oil filter as well to ensure the system has the maximum amount of flow.

Other things to check

While the car is in the shop, have the radiator and heater hoses checked for cracks, leaks, or contamination from oil or grease. The hoses should be firm yet pliable when vou squeeze them. Scrap them if they feel brittle or overly soft.

Try to keep your coolant mixture in a 50/50 ratio of antifreeze and water. This will keep your coolant from freezing until temperatures are well below zero. Colder conditions, however, can call for a 60/40 or 70/30 ratio. Under no circumstances should you use a higher antifreeze-to-water ratio than this.

Consider new tires

Spinning out in the snow and ending up in a ditch isn't the best way to discover your tires are worn out. So, if you've been waiting to pick up a new set of tires, don't delay as your safety depends on tire traction and winter-grade tires tend to be in short supply when the snow begins to fall. (Find out how winter/snow tires compare to all-season tires.)

If your area only gets occasional snow, a new set of all-season tires should do the job. Look for a highly rated set that has performed well in snow-traction and icebraking tests. Remember that it's safest to replace all four tires at one time.

If you live where snow and ice are everpresent, consider buying dedicated winter tires mounted on inexpensive steel wheels. These have tread patterns and rubber compounds specially designed to grip snow and ice for optimum traction on slick roads.

Winter tires typically have shorter tread life and generate more road noise than the all-season tires that your vehicle came with, but the extra safety they provide is generally worth the compromise.

Even if your tires are in good shape, make sure that you keep them properly inflated. Big drops in temperature mean your tires will lose air, because tire pressure declines with the thermometer.





State Farm Life Insurance Company (Not licensed in MA, NY or WI)

Fall/Winter 2024-25 AUTOMOTIVE CARE GUIDE **Safe winter driving tips** HOW TO MAKE TIME ON THE ROAD IN INCLEMENT WEATHER SAFER

Impaired visibility can be a safety hazard while driving. Everything from sun glare to hail can affect a driver's ability to see the road and navigate it effectively.

Before drivers get behind the wheel, they should make note of their local forecast. It's also advised to make a plan for what to do if rain, snow, or other conditions make it challenging to drive at any point throughout the trip.

The International Association of Traffic and Safety Sciences indicates that, based on an examination of crash test data conducted by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the "likelihood of a crash increases during periods of low visibility, despite the tendency for less traffic and for lower speeds to prevail during these times.'

While we can't make poor conditions improve, drivers can take several steps to aid in making their visibility better when driving in less than ideal weather.

Do an inspection

Inspect and change windshield wiper blades. Wipers are instrumental in clearing precipitation away from the windshield. If they're not functioning properly, wipers cannot do their jobs.

Drivers should replace their wipers at the first indication that they are no longer effective

In some conditions, wipers can freeze or stick. In the event that this happens, drivers should then pull over in a safe area and clean the wipers manually.

Clear obstructions

Always make sure the windshield is clear before driving. This can include removing ice and snow in the winter and cleaning off mud or bug splatter in the spring and summer. Use the front and rear defrost if condensation fogs up windshields and windows.

Slow down

Foul weather can reduce drivers ability to see far into the distance. Drivers should always drive slower in inclement weather in order to improve reaction time.

Top off fluids

Always keep the windshield washer reservoir full and keep extra fluid in the trunk. In addition, look for a fluid that does not freeze in very cold temperatures.

Learn how to drive in fog

Each year, more than 38,700 vehicle crashes occur in fog, states the Federal Highway Administration.

Travelers Insurance recommends slowing down, staying focused, and using regular headlights rather than high beams whenever a person is driving in fog

Go out only if necessary

In snowy or icy conditions, drive only if it's absolutely necessary, as snow and ice can impair visibility and make roads slick, says AAA.

Avoid driving at dusk and dawn

The human eye can have trouble adjusting to rapidly changing light and darkness conditions, which are common at dusk and dawn.

If possible, drivers should make trips during the heart of the day, especially if poor lighting conditions typically make it difficult for them to drive

(METRO CREATIVE)





According to transportation safety experts, the likelihood of a crash increases during periods of low visibility, despite the tendency for less traffic and for lower speeds to prevail during these times. Drivers can take several steps to improve their visibility when driving in poor weather conditions.



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