



Wintertime and Defensive Driving

While a good offense may be the best defense in football, this doesn't hold true in driving. Fair or foul weather, driving always presents hazards. But as winter months approach us, a defensive driver has to be aware of those changing conditions that happen in a split second.

10 TIPS FOR DEFENSIVE WINTER DRIVING

1. Be able to see and be seen. Clean all the snow and ice off of your windshield, other window, outside mirrors, lights, and reflectors. Make sure your vehicle is equipped with good wiper blades, and that wiper arms are exerting enough pressure on the blades to ensure a clean sweep. If moisture or ice builds up on the inside or outside of your windshield, stop and clean it off.
2. Know and obey company rules for the operation of your vehicle.
3. Tires with good deep treads are essential for good cornering and handling on slippery roads. Check the air pressure frequently to maintain the manufacturer's recommended pressure.
4. Stretch your "following" distance. Knowing that winter surfaces increase stopping distance three to 12 times, the smart driver increases his normal dry road following distance. Heavy trucks require a longer stopping distance on slippery roads than passenger cars. And don't tailgate.
5. Be willing to yield the right-of-way to prevent accidents.
6. Pump your brakes. The key to stopping under control on slippery surfaces is to avoid locking the wheels. A rapid pumping of brakes will provide short intervals of braking and of rolling wheels alternately and will enable you to maintain steering control while stopping.
7. Adjust driving to the special hazards of:
 - a. pedestrians
 - b. the road
 - c. weather
 - d. traffic
 - e. degree of light
 - f. the added dangers brought on by your own emotions such as anger and worry
8. Use proper lights. Never drive with parking lights instead of head-lights in winter's early dusk and poor visibility. Parking lights can cause an on-coming driver to think you are farther away than you are. Keep head-lights clean; dirty ones can greatly reduce your own seeing distance at night.
9. Be particularly cautious approaching intersections. It will lessen the odds of an accident by taking your foot off the gas and putting it on the brake to shorten your reaction time for stopping.
10. Have an ATTITUDE of confidence that you can drive without ever having an accident. Be POSITIVE about accident prevention.

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