



As temperatures drop this winter, follow these ten steps to stay safe during the cold weather.

- 1. Layer up!** Wear layers of lightweight clothing to stay warm. Gloves and a hat will help prevent losing your body heat.
- 2. Don't forget your furry friends.** Bring pets indoors. If they can't come inside, make sure they have enough shelter to keep them warm and that they can get to unfrozen water.
- 3. Remember the three feet rule.** If you are using a space heater, place it on a level, hard surface and keep anything flammable at least three feet away – things such as paper, clothing, bedding, curtains or rugs.
- 4. Requires supervision** – Turn off space heaters and make sure fireplace embers are out before leaving the room or going to bed.
- 5. Don't catch fire!** If you are using a fireplace, use a glass or metal fire screen large enough to catch sparks and rolling logs.
- 6. Protect your pipes.** Run water, even at a trickle, to help prevent your pipes from freezing. Open the kitchen and bathroom cabinet doors to allow warmer air to circulate around the plumbing. Be sure to move any harmful cleaners and household chemicals out of the reach of children. Keep the garage doors closed if there are water lines in the garage.
- 7. Better safe than sorry.** Keep the thermostat at the same temperature day and night. Your heating bill may be a little higher, but you could avoid a more costly repair job if your pipes freeze and burst.

**8. The kitchen is for cooking.** Never use a stove or oven to heat your home.

**9. Use generators outside.** Never operate a generator inside the home, including in the basement or garage.

**10. Knowledge is power.** Don't hook a generator up to the home's wiring. The safest thing to do is to connect the equipment you want to power directly to the outlets on the generator.

For more information on how to stay safe during the cold weather, visit [winter storm safety](#).



## Prepare your Home for Winter



Check your heating system to ensure it's running properly



Check and replace batteries in smoke detectors and CO alarms



Make sure you have enough heating fuel if applicable



Insulate water line to avoid pipes freezing and/or bursting



# Winter Weather Tips

for your four-legged friends!

It's a common belief that dogs and cats are resistant than people to cold weather because of their fur, but it's untrue. Like people, cats and dogs are susceptible to frostbite and hypothermia.

- 1. Keep Pets Inside**

Longer-haired and thick-coated dog breeds, such as huskies and other dogs bred for colder climates, are more tolerant of cold weather; but no pet should be left outside for long periods of time in below-freezing weather.
- 2. Provide Choices**

Just like you, pets prefer comfortable sleeping places and may change their location based on their need for more or less warmth. Give them some safe options to allow them to vary their sleeping place to adjust to their needs.
- 3. Make Some NOISE!**

A warm vehicle engine can be an appealing heat source for outdoor and feral cats, but it's deadly. Check underneath your car, bang on the hood, and honk the horn before starting the engine to encourage feline hitchhikers to abandon their roost under the hood.
- 4. Play Dress Up!**

If your dog has a short coat or seems bothered by the cold weather, consider a sweater or dog coat. Have several on hand, so you can use a dry sweater or coat each time your dog goes outside. Wet sweaters or coats can actually make your dog colder. Some pet owners also use booties to protect their dog's feet; if you choose to use them, make sure they fit properly.
- 5. Provide Shelter**

We don't recommend keeping any pet outside for long periods of time, but if you are unable to keep your dog inside during cold weather, provide them with a warm, dry, solid shelter against wind. If you're able to, consider providing shelters for stray cats in the neighborhood.
- 6. Be Prepared**

Cold weather also brings the risks of severe winter weather, blizzards and power outages. Prepare a disaster/emergency kit, and include your pet in your plans. Have enough food, water and medicine (including any prescription medications as well as heartworm and flea/tick preventives) on hand to get through at least 5 days.



**thatpetplace.com**

Information provided by the AVMA at <https://www.avma.org/public/PetCare/Pages/Cold-weather-pet-safety.aspx>



## Dressing for Cold Weather



### Dress Warmly and Stay Dry

Adults and children should wear:

- a hat
- a scarf or knit mask to cover face and mouth
- sleeves that are snug at the wrist
- mittens (they are warmer than gloves)
- water-resistant coat and boots
- several layers of loose-fitting clothing

### Layer-up

1. **Inner Layer:** Wear fabrics that will hold more body heat and don't absorb moisture. Wool, silk, or polypropylene will hold more body heat than cotton.
2. **Insulation Layer:** An insulation layer will help you retain heat by trapping air close to your body. Natural fibers, like wool or goose down, or a classic fleece work best.
3. **Outer Layer:** The outermost layer helps protect you from wind, rain, and snow. It should be tightly woven, and preferably water and wind resistant, to reduce loss of body heat.

### Additional Tips:

- Stay dry—wet clothing chills the body rapidly.
- Excess perspiration will increase heat loss, so remove extra layers of clothing whenever you feel too warm.
- Also, avoid getting gasoline or alcohol on your skin while de-icing and fueling your car or using a snow blower. These materials in contact with the skin greatly increase heat loss from the body.
- Do not ignore shivering. It's an important first sign that the body is losing heat. Persistent shivering is a signal to return indoors.



## Preparing for Winter Driving - How to Drive in Snow and Ice

The three key elements to safe winter driving are:

- Stay alert;
- Slow down; and
- Stay in control

It is best to winterize your vehicle before winter strikes. **Schedule a maintenance check-up for the vehicle's tires and tire pressure, battery, belts and hoses, radiator, oil, lights, brakes, exhaust system, heater/defroster, wipers and ignition system.** Keep your gas tank sufficiently full – at least half a tank is recommended. Depending upon where you drive, you may consider using winter tires or tire chains.

Winter driving conditions such as rain, snow, and ice dramatically affect the braking distance of a vehicle. The driver's capability to complete a smooth and safe stop is severely limited due to reduced tire traction. In order to stop safely, **the vehicle's wheels must maintain traction by remaining on contact with the road surface while rolling**, referred to as "rolling traction."

When handling slippery winter roads, the keys to safety are slower speeds, gentler stops and turns, and increased following distances. It is recommended that drivers reduce their speed to half the posted speed limit or less under snowy road conditions.

Don't try to stretch more miles from your tires during the winter months. If your tread depth is getting low, it can have serious effects on dry pavement, but those effects are multiplied in wet and snowy conditions. When in doubt, get new tires.

Tire pressure **usually lowers itself in winter** and raises itself in summer. Under-inflated tires can cause a car to react more slowly to steering. Every time the outside temperature drops ten degrees, **the air pressure inside your tires goes down about one or two PSI**. Tires lose air normally through the process of permeation. Drivers should check their tire pressures frequently during cold weather, adding enough air to keep the car recommended levels of inflation at all times.

Sand and salt play a big role in keeping roads safe. The spreading of road salt prevents snow and ice from bonding to the road surface, which is why salt is usually spread early in a storm to prevent snow build-up and to aid in snow removal operations.

Unlike salt, **sand does not melt and therefore helps by providing traction on slippery surfaces**. Sand is often used when temperatures are too low for salt to be effective or at higher temperatures for immediate traction, particularly on hills, curves, bridges, intersections and on snow-packed roads.

Caution must be used when snow plows are on the roadways as snowplows and salt and sand trucks travel much slower than regular traffic. Passing a snowplow can be extremely dangerous as sight lines and visibility near a working snowplow are severely restricted by blowing snow.

Roads are typically cooler in shady areas and drivers may encounter another extremely dangerous element known as “black ice.” **Always slow down your vehicle when you see shady areas** under these types of conditions.

**Here are some safe-driving tips that will help you when roads are slick with ice or snow:**

- Get the feel of the road by starting out slowly and testing your steering control and braking ability. Avoid spinning your tires when you start by gently pressing your gas pedal until the car starts to roll. Start slowing down at least three times sooner than you normally would when turning or stopping.
- Equip your vehicle with chains or snow tires. Chains are by far the most effective, and they should be used where ice and snow remain on the roadway. Remember that snow tires will slide on ice or packed snow so keep your distance.
- Reduce your speed to correspond with conditions. There is no such thing as a “safe” speed range at which you may drive on snow or ice. You must be extremely cautious until you are able to determine how much traction you can expect from your tires.
- When stopping, avoid sudden movements of the steering wheel and pump the brake gently. Avoid locking of brakes on glazed ice as it will cause a loss of steering and control. Every city block and every mile of highway may be different, depending upon sun or shade and the surface of the roadway. (Check your vehicle owner’s manual, if the vehicle has anti-lock brakes, you may apply steady pressure to the brake pedal.)
- Maintain a safe interval between you and the car ahead of you according to the conditions of the pavement. Many needless rear-end crashes occur on icy streets because drivers forget to leave stopping space.

- Keep your vehicle in the best possible driving condition. The lights, tires, brakes, windshield wipers, defroster, and radiator are especially important for winter driving.
- Keep your windows clear. Don't start driving until the windows are defrosted and clean - even if you're only going a short distance.
- Watch for danger or slippery spots ahead. Ice may remain on bridges even though the rest of the road is clear. Snow and ice also stick longer in shaded areas.

Correctly operating windshield wipers and defrosters are essential to safety while driving in snow and ice conditions. Properly maintained windshield wipers are a must; there are also special blades available that are better equipped to assist in the removal of snow from the windshield. Defroster effectiveness is essential in the initial clearing of snow and ice from the windshield – and in some instances the rear window when a vehicle is so equipped – and should be checked well in advance of need. In certain cases, a change of the vehicle thermostat will restore appropriate heat to the defroster system.

