



## Tips for Safe Winter Driving

NO MATTER WHAT kind of a car or truck you drive, it can present problems and irritations in winter.

Getting going and keeping going can tax the patience of the most experienced driver. You've seen drivers futilely "grinding" away trying to start a cold engine; motorists frantically spinning wheels until tires scream; cars or trucks lurching on slick pavement or being towed or pushed.

Here are a few common-sense rules that can make winter driving easier than most people think possible: Pump the accelerator three or four times before you try to start. This draws sufficient gas into the manifold for the ignition to work on instantly.

### Warm Up Engine

Wait until the motor is thoroughly warmed up before getting under way. This will give the oil a chance to fully lubricate the engine and prevent wear and tear on moving parts once you start. Moreover, the chances of stalling will be reduced and you will have a better opportunity to maneuver on slippery pavements.

Starting in second gear or "drive" on an automatic transmission will assure a speedier, smoother getaway if you are parked on ice or snow. Less power will reach the rear wheels, acceleration will be smoother and your chances of spinning the rear wheels will be reduced.

If the wheels spin pulling away from a parking place or while driving on slick pavement, take your foot off the accelerator immediately. A heavy foot on the gas pedal in winter driving is an invitation to trouble or disaster.

### Parking

When parking, try to avoid leaving the rear wheels on ice or snow, especially if you must park parallel. If you start suddenly, the rear end might slough around and jam the wheel against the curb, thus compounding your trouble. If you park diagonally, it's wise not to pull all the way into the stall. Allow a few inches between the curb and front wheels so you can pull forward if you have trouble backing out or need to rock the car to get going.

There's a knack to getting the engine started when you're being pushed. Doing it properly can save time and prevent damage to the gears.

It's simple if the car has a manual shift. Push in the clutch, shift into second or high, turn on the ignition when your speed reaches five miles an hour, then let out the clutch. But it's a little more complicated with an automatic transmission. Before your pusher makes contact with your rear bumper, put the shift lever into neutral. Keep the ignition off. When the speed reaches 20 or 25 miles an hour switch on the ignition, shift to low and apply gas evenly and lightly.

### Highway Driving

Highway driving in winter calls for extra skill and alertness. Going downhill presents special problems, as do obscured traffic signs or markers knocked down by snowplows.

When you get to the crest of a hill, shift into low. If you have a manual

shift, ease out slowly on the clutch. Releasing it fast will act as a brake and possibly send the vehicle into a dangerous side skid. If this happens, quickly shift into neutral and pump the brakes before going back again into low. Forget about the parking brake. Using it to try to stop will lock the rear wheels and send you into a spin.

Long hours of darkness and gloom combine with snow and ice to increase problems and irritations. Snow blowing across the highway can obscure traffic signs. When snow is blowing, drive at reduced speed.

### Road Signs

At night, some highway signs blend with the snow cover, making them difficult to see. Signs coated with a reflective material glow in beams of vehicle headlights, enabling a driver to observe their message hundreds of feet before he reaches the marker. Try to use roads having signs that "light up"



Blowing snow frequently obscures familiar landmarks or traffic signs. Under these conditions it is wise to reduce speed so you won't miss a sign that could avoid trouble if you saw it in time.

because they are guides to a safer and easier journey.

Snow banked at intersections often hides stop signs. It's a good idea to keep an eye on the snowbanks on your right. When you notice them growing smaller you can bet there's an intersection ahead because the plow blade was lifted to avoid blocking the cross road.

Many traffic signs are knocked down or severely damaged by snowplows. If you see signs in this condition, report them to police, county or state officials. Your thoughtfulness might prevent another driver from having an accident.

Whether you're in town or on the highway, skidding is probably the most serious problem you will encounter in winter driving. If you start to skid, don't hit the brakes. You'll just skid more. Turn the front wheels in the direction of the skid and step on the accelerator lightly. As you pull out of the skid and begin rolling forward again pump your brakes to slow down or stop.

### Spinning Wheels

One of the worst irritations of winter driving is getting stuck. All the horses under the hood won't get you rolling if you bear down on the accelerator and try to "bull" your way out if your wheels are spinning. The more they spin the deeper they sink into loose snow or the slicker icy pavement becomes because of friction.

An easy solution to getting "unstuck" is to bleed air from the rear tires to bring more tread into contact with the slippery pavement. Cardboard, newspapers, an old rug, the trunk mat or sand wedged under the rear wheels may solve the problem.

Rocking the car or truck will build up momentum when you're ready to try again. Alternate shifting into opposite gears while applying gas lightly.