



Winter can be a beautiful season of the year, and can also create hazardous driving conditions. When traveling during the winter months, being prepared and alert is critical.

The Bremerton Police Department wants to provide you with some winter driving safety tips. These tips, combined with planning ahead, driving at safe and legal speeds, not drinking and driving, and buckling up can help ensure that you arrive safely to your final destination.

### Winter Driving Tips:

- Go slow! Drive according to conditions
- Clear snow and ice from all windows and lights and the hood and roof
- Make sure interior windows are fog and condensation free
- Pay attention and drive defensively - go slow and drive according to the conditions. Remember, the posted speed limits are for “normal” driving conditions and dry pavement
- Drive with your headlights on
- Leave plenty of room for stopping
- Use your brakes carefully. Remember it takes more time to stop in adverse conditions. If your car is equipped with anti-lock brakes, do not pump your brakes in attempting to stop
- Watch for slippery overpasses and bridge decks. These surfaces will frost and ice up sooner than the adjacent pavement
- Don't use your cruise control in winter conditions. Even roads that appear clear can have sudden slippery spots and the short touch of your brakes to deactivate the cruise control feature can cause you to lose control of your vehicle
- Carry a cellular phone; it can be useful to you or another motorist in case of an emergency
- Check road conditions on a regular basis
- Stock your car with basic winter driving equipment such as: a scraper and brush, small shovel, jumper cables, tow chain, a bag of sand or cat litter for tire traction, road flares, a blanket, heavy boots, warm clothing, and a flashlight with batteries

**Skidding:** If you go into a skid, act quickly by taking your foot off the accelerator. Keep your foot off the brake and steer in the direction the rear of the vehicle is skidding. In other words, if you want your vehicle to go right, turn right. If you want it to go left, turn left. Hold the steering wheel firmly, but don't make large turns. Use a light touch to correct the swerve.

**Don't get overconfident in your 4x4 vehicle:** Remember that your four-wheel drive vehicle may help you get going quicker than other vehicles but it

**won't help you stop any faster.** A 4x4 can lose traction as quickly as a two-wheel drive vehicle.

**Prepare your vehicle for winter driving:** Get your vehicle winterized to avoid any unpleasant or dangerous situations while traveling in winter weather. Keeping your fuel tank as full as possible will minimize condensation, providing the maximum advantage in case of trouble. Have the following items checked on your vehicle to keep your vehicle reliable and safe:

- Fuel system
- Belts
- Fluid levels
- Brakes
- Exhaust system
- Wiper blades and windshield washer fluid
- Snow tires
- Tire tread and pressure
- Defroster
- Proper grade oil
- Cooling system
- Battery
- Lights
- Antifreeze

Following these tips and guidelines will help you meet the challenges and potential dangers faced by motorists, including slippery road surfaces, limited visibility, and freezing temperatures. Basic preparation and safe driving habits will increase your chances of getting through the winter season safely.