



Everyone needs to be prepared for the unpredictability of fall and winter weather. Please don't wait until weather conditions deteriorate. Whether you're driving across town, or across the province, it's important that you

and your vehicle are prepared for winter driving conditions.

### **5 actions to reduce the risk of a winter driving crash:**

1. **Prepare yourself and your vehicle for the winter season and conditions *now*.** Do not wait until the snow, black ice, heavy rain, fog, extended periods of darkness and colder temperatures hit. Whether you are driving a fleet or personal vehicle for work, ensure it is winter ready with a pre-season maintenance check-up. Ensure your vehicle is equipped with:
  - a. a battery, brakes, light and fuses, cooling and heating systems, electrical and exhaust systems and belts and hoses, which have been found to be in good condition by a qualified person and meet manufacturer's specifications.
  - b. suitable first-aid supplies and a [winter survival kit](#).
  - c. a set of four matched winter tires. Winter tires in good condition with adequate tread depth are a legal requirement on B.C. highways during the winter driving season. While tires with the mud and snow symbol meet the minimum legal requirement, tires with the 3-peaked mountain and snowflake symbol offer the best traction on snow and ice, and when temperatures fall below 7°C.
  - d. chains in good condition, that fit your tires and that you know how/ have the tools to put on, if you operate a commercial truck. Commercial vehicles in B.C. are legally required to carry chains from October 1 to March 31.
2. **Determine if driving for work is necessary.** If possible, accomplish your work tasks via email, conference calls, online meetings, courier or public transit to eliminate the need to drive.
3. **Check road and weather conditions and determine whether it's safe to drive.** Check road conditions by using resources such as [DriveBC.ca](#) for highway driving or news or weather services before a trip. Don't drive if conditions are unsafe, or worsening; cancel or re-schedule trips when necessary.
4. **Plan your trip.** If driving is necessary, develop a trip plan including determining the safest route, alternate routes in case of closures or conditions, rest breaks and who and when

you'll be checking in with. Determine whether your vehicle is right for the trip; is it equipped for roads and weather conditions? Determine whether you are fit to drive; ensure you aren't fatigued or on any medication, and that you have appropriate snacks and water available. Familiarize yourself with your vehicle's safety features; adjust mirrors, seats, steering wheels, and head rests.

5. **Drive safely.**

a. Slow down. No matter how much driving experience you have, the way your vehicle will handle on snow, ice or rain can be unpredictable. The posted speed limit is the maximum speed allowed under ideal conditions. Drivers have a legal responsibility to drive according to the conditions, which often means driving below the posted speed limit. Reducing your speed will allow you more time to react to hazards such as black ice or pedestrians at intersections.

b. Maintain a safe following distance. It takes longer to stop on a slippery road. Look ahead and keep plenty of distance between you and other cars — at least four seconds.

c. Learn or be trained in winter driving skills such as how to brake safely and get out of a skid.

[DriveBC.ca](http://DriveBC.ca) - provides current road and travel conditions.

[ShiftIntoWinter.ca](http://ShiftIntoWinter.ca) - information on how to prepare your vehicle, plan your trip and how to drive safely on winter roads

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Winter road conditions can change quickly. So should your speed. Slow down. More info at [ShiftintoWinter.ca](http://ShiftintoWinter.ca).

