

Know Before You Go: How to Prepare Your Car for Winter

Autotrader experts offer simple car care tips to help drivers face the challenges that come with winter.

ATLANTA, Dec. 10, 2015 /PRNewswire/ -- From freezing temperatures to heavy snow, winter brings with it unique challenges for car owners. To help drivers prepare for the coming winter season, the editors at Autotrader put together a list of simple, but effective, [winter car care tips](#).

A few of the top winter car care tips are below:

- **Test your battery.** It's often more difficult for a battery to operate in cold weather than in warm weather; a battery that's merely weak during the summer could turn into a dead battery in winter. Have a volt test performed before winter starts to make sure it's in good shape. If it isn't, buy a new battery.
- **Check and fill coolant.** Coolant, also known as antifreeze, keeps the engine from freezing in cold temperatures. Make sure your coolant is filled, and check for leaks that could cause coolant to drain out. Many mechanics recommend using a 50/50-mix of coolant and water in your radiator, which usually results in a lower engine freezing point than just coolant.
- **Keep gasoline and washer fluid filled.** A full tank of gasoline may prevent accumulated water from freezing inside your fuel pump and can help you stay warm by allowing the engine to stay running if you get stuck. Meanwhile, a full windshield-washer reservoir is tremendously important, as messy road debris from a snowstorm can sometimes necessitate constant window washing to see where you're going.
- **Monitor tire pressure.** Tire pressure can drop along with the air temperature, losing up to one pound per square inch with every 10-degree drop. Driving around with low tire pressure makes cars handle less predictably and can cause premature tire wear or tread separation. Check your tire pressure as temperatures drop, and fill your tires if needed.
- **Pack a survival kit.** Emergencies can happen anywhere, and you don't want to be stuck without the essentials. A good winter survival kit has at least a blanket, a first-aid kit, a knife, a flashlight, jumper cables, shovel and a cellphone charger that works in your vehicle's cigarette lighter. Also, keep a de-icer spray in the cabin of your vehicle, so you can access the engine or trunk if they get frozen shut.



For the complete list of tips, check out Autotrader's [8 Simple Winter Car Care Tips](#).

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