

If your **rear wheels** start to skid:

1. Turn the steering wheel in the direction you want the front wheels to go. If your rear wheels are sliding left, steer left. If they're sliding right, steer right.

If your rear wheels start sliding the other way as you recover, ease the steering wheel toward that side. You might have to steer left and right a few times to get your vehicle completely under control.

If your car has an anti-lock braking system (ABS), keep your foot on the pedal. If not, pump the pedal gently, pumping more rapidly as your car slows down. Braking hard with non-anti-lock brakes will make the skid worse.

If your **front wheels** skid:

Take your foot off the gas and shift to neutral, but *don't* try to steer immediately.

As the wheels skid sideways, they will slow the vehicle and traction will return. As it does, steer in the direction you want to go. Then put the transmission in "drive" or release the clutch, and accelerate gently.



Frequently Asked Questions

Q. How long does it take for a plow operator to drive his route?

A. Each snowplow operator has a designated "beat" that is approximately 40 lane miles in length. For a two-lane highway, it takes roughly 2 hours to complete the route, while a four-lane highway beat takes 1½ hours.

Q. Why are the roads plowed in the middle of the night?

A. Snowstorms can strike at any time of the day, and the roadways must be plowed to ensure safety for the traveling public.

Q. Why are the roadways treated before it starts to snow?

A. Treating the road before a storm forms a layer of brine on the pavement, greatly decreasing the formation of ice on the roadway. Pre-treating allows us to use less salt and makes it easier to plow the snow off of the road safely since the snow is not bonded to the pavement. Technology such as weather stations and pavement temperature sensors on plow trucks and NY State Police vehicles gives us a head start on storms and enhances snow fighting capabilities.

Q. Why are the shoulders plowed?

A. The shoulders must be plowed so that vehicles can pull off the roadway in the event of an emergency.

Check current

road conditions....

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For further information visit:

nysdot.gov

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ICE & SNOW
TAKE IT SLOW

**Safe Winter
Driving Tips**

Winter is the most difficult driving season and it can be a challenge for the most experienced drivers. Not only do you have snow and ice to deal with, but there are fewer hours of daylight. Winter driving conditions can change rapidly, so be prepared at all times.

Drive slowly. Even if your vehicle has good traction in ice and snow, other drivers will be traveling cautiously. Don't disrupt the flow of traffic by driving faster than everyone else.

Always remember to check current road conditions statewide by logging onto

511ny.org

Maintain your vehicle:

- Have your battery, brakes, exhaust system, lights, wiper blades and tire treads checked;
 - Keep the washer reservoir full of non-freeze fluid;
 - Check your anti-freeze;
 - Never travel with less than half a tank of gas; and
 - Never combine radial and non-radial tires on the same vehicle. On front-wheel drive cars, it's best to put snow tires or "all-season" tires on all four wheels, not just the front.
- See and be seen:**
- Clear all windows, wipers and the roof of your vehicle of snow and ice before you start driving;
 - Clear headlights and taillights so that others may see you; and
 - Drive with your headlights on...It's the law.

Vehicle survival kit:

- flashlight with extra batteries;
- cell phone;
- jumper cables;
- tow cable or chain;
- abrasive material for traction (sand, kitty litter, even floor mats);
- shovel;
- snow brush/ice scraper;
- blankets;
- hat/mittens/boots;
- bright fabric for your antenna;
- warning device (flares or reflectors);
- non-perishable snacks/high energy bars;
- extra medication;
- candle;
- waterproof matches; and
- empty coffee can to melt snow.

Plan ahead:

- Plan your route;
- Allow plenty of time;
- Advise others of your plans including routes and estimated arrival times, then confirm your arrival at your destination.

Share the road with snowplows:

- **The safest place to drive is at least eight car lengths behind a snowplow.** Your safest place in bad weather is a safe distance behind a snowplow where you will find the clearest road and best traction. Passing a snowplow is dangerous for numerous reasons: a snowplow creates a ridge of snow to its side that can cause you to lose control of your vehicle; the plow kicks up a snow cloud which causes total white out conditions; it may be difficult to see the blade of the plow which can extend

several feet ahead of the truck and up to 30 inches beyond the truck's width; and snow clouds created by the plow can obscure vehicles following too closely.

• **Never pass a snowplow on the right.**

Because of plow blades and de-icing equipment, the snowplow operator's visibility is restricted to his/her right and behind the vehicle. Remember that if you can't see the driver's side mirrors, he/she can't see you!

• **Do not shovel or blow snow from driveways or sidewalks onto roadways.**

This could create hazards such as icy roadways for motorists. It is also against the law!

What if you're stalled or stranded?

- Stay with your vehicle because it is your best shelter;
- Call 911 if you have a cell phone and report your situation;
- Tie a piece of bright fabric to your antenna for rescuers to see;

• Run the engine periodically for heat and light (approximately once an hour under normal temperature conditions or once every half-hour in extremely cold conditions);

• Periodically clear the snow from your exhaust pipe to prevent back up of carbon monoxide;

• Keep warm without fuel and keep your blood circulating freely by loosening tight clothing, moving your arms and legs, massaging fingers and toes, tucking your fingers between your legs or armpits and elevating your feet;

• Leave one window slightly open for fresh air; and

• Melt snow in coffee can with candle for drinking water

If you skid:

To avoid skids, brake carefully and gently on snow or ice. "Squeeze" your brakes in slow, steady strokes. Allow the wheels to keep rolling. If they start to lock up, ease off the brake pedal. As you slow down, you may also want to shift into a lower gear. When sleet, freezing rain or snow start to fall, remember that bridges, ramps and overpasses are likely to freeze first. Also be aware that slippery spots may still remain after road crews have cleared the highways.

In a rear-wheel drive vehicle, you can usually feel a loss of traction or the beginning of a skid. There may be no such warning in a front-wheel drive, however. Front-wheel drives *do* handle better in ice and snow, but they *do not* have flawless traction, and skids can occur unexpectedly. Don't let the better feel and handling of a front-wheel drive car cause you to drive faster than you should. Despite a popular misconception, the best approach to recovering from a skid is the *same* for both front and rear-wheel drive vehicles.

