



Winterize Your Car for the Season

It is that time of year again, winter, and preparation in all areas of life is important, including the vehicle you drive. Take the following steps to ensure that your vehicle will serve you well in the cold winter months.

Have a professional check and service the following:

- Ignition system, including wiring and plugs
- Battery level and battery cables
- All belts and hoses
- Antifreeze level and freeze zone
- The braking system including rotors, pads, calipers or shoes and drums

You should have a personal monthly routine maintenance schedule that has been developed from your vehicle's owners manual.

This would include:

- Maintaining proper levels of antifreeze/coolant, oil, transmission fluid, brake fluid, steering fluid.
- Maintaining proper tire inflation, tread, and sidewalls.
- Checking all lights front, rear, marker, brake, directions signals, etc.
- Checking windshield wiper arms, replacing worn wiper blades, and topping off windshield washer fluid. (In winter, the washer fluid must be changed to a type that freezes at a lower wind chill)

It is also important to have an emergency winter driving kit in your trunk that includes:

- Flashlight with an extra set of batteries
- Tire chains (depending upon the typical snow levels of your region)
- Jumper cables
- Properly inflated spare tire and the tools to change a tire
- A bag of salt or kitty litter, which can be used as traction material
- Snow scraper/brush
- Warm blanket along with spare hat and gloves
- Non-perishable foods
- First-aid kit
- Flares or reflective triangle
- Winter grade windshield washer fluid

Sources:

NSC Fact Sheet

<http://www.nsc.org/library/facts/winter.htm>

Tips for Wintertime Operation

<http://www.state.ia.us/government/dps/isp/winteroperation.htm>

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