



## Winter Driving Tips

Few of us have much experience of driving in severe winter conditions. As part of its Road Sense campaign, designed to help improve the safety of drivers, passengers and all road users, car hire specialist carrentals.co.uk highlights key tips on how to stay safe in potentially treacherous snow and ice:

- **Create Space** - If there is snow, ice or just heavy rain, you should increase the distance you usually leave between your car and the one ahead – in wet weather the stopping distance doubles and in snow and ice you should at least triple the distance.
- **Buckle Up** - It is the law in most countries, so do always remember to wear your seatbelt in the front – and in the back if you have them – of the car.
- **Be Seen** - Always keep your headlights clean and in winter conditions keep them on even if you think no one else on the road has theirs on. Be careful using fog lights or full beams in heavy snow, as they will create unnecessary glare.
- **Snow Chains** - If you're going to be hiring a car to drive in potentially snowy conditions, book your snow chains when you book your car hire to ensure you're covered. It's also worth practicing putting them on and taking them off during the day, rather than waiting until you may need to put them on at night.

- **Change Gears** - Reduce the risk of sliding and wheel spin, particularly when pulling away or going up hill, by putting the car into a higher gear than you would for normal dry conditions. For example, pulling away in 2<sup>nd</sup> gear can help on ice or packed snow.
- **Slow Down** - On corners, slow down well before you normally would and ensure your speed is low enough to stop you losing traction. You should also avoid any sharp steering movements that may cause the car to slide.
- **Anticipate Braking** - The best way to avoid a skid is to anticipate braking – any sudden braking will make the car skid on snow or ice. To brake, gradually alternate engine braking with pedal braking to avoid the locking of wheels. If the wheels lock when you brake and the car starts to slide release the brake pedal to help recover traction, then brake again slowly while also braking with the engine.
- **Carry the Essentials** - In bad conditions always consider if your journey is essential, but if you do need to travel, try to make sure you have a blanket, torch, mobile phone, shovel and some chocolate and a hot drink in the car.
- **Skidding** - If your car starts to skid don't go for the brakes. Take your foot off the accelerator and steer into the direction of the skid until the car is under control – again make sure you steer with smooth, not abrupt, movements.
- **Stuck in a Rut** - If your car gets stuck in snow don't continue spinning your wheels – it will just be harder to get out of the rut. Spread sand or salt around the wheels to give them grip – or remove snow from around the wheels to create a clear run onto the road.

**Disclaimer** - These tips are not exhaustive and are for information only. Carrentals.co.uk can not be held responsible for any losses incurred as a result of acting on any information contained herein. We hope you find all of the tips useful to help with road safety.

**For further information visit the following sites:**

[www.michelin.co.uk](http://www.michelin.co.uk)

[www.rac.co.uk](http://www.rac.co.uk)

