

Auto Repair Guide

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How to Winterize Your Car

How to Prepare a Car for Winter Driving

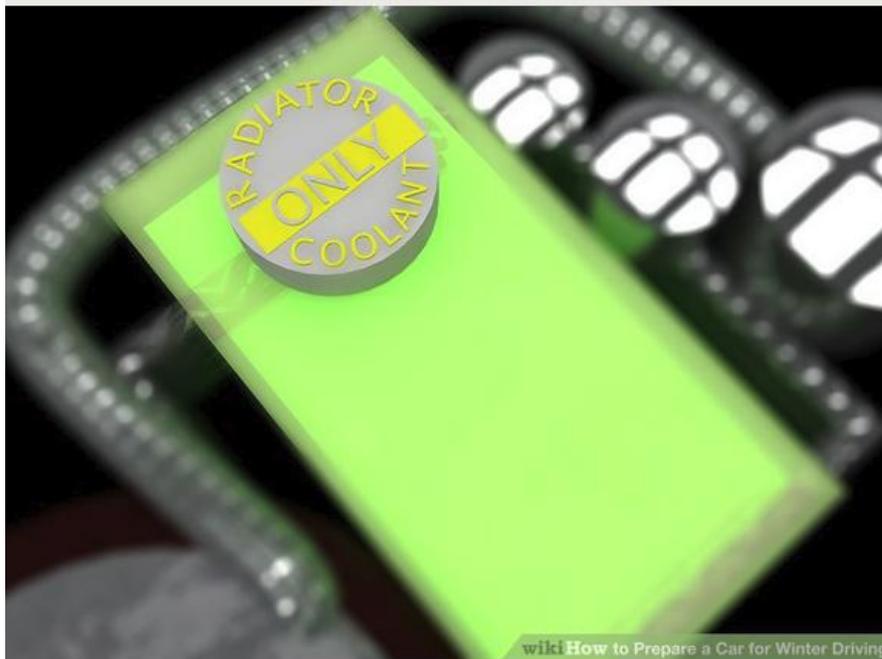
One Methods: [■ Emergency Preparedness](#) [👤 Community Q&A](#)

You must prepare your car for winter driving - unless you live in an area of the world where there is only a minimal difference in winter and summer weather. It is essential that you prepare a car for winter driving, because winter puts unusual demands on its parts and equipment. Failure to do so can result in a life-threatening situation.

Steps

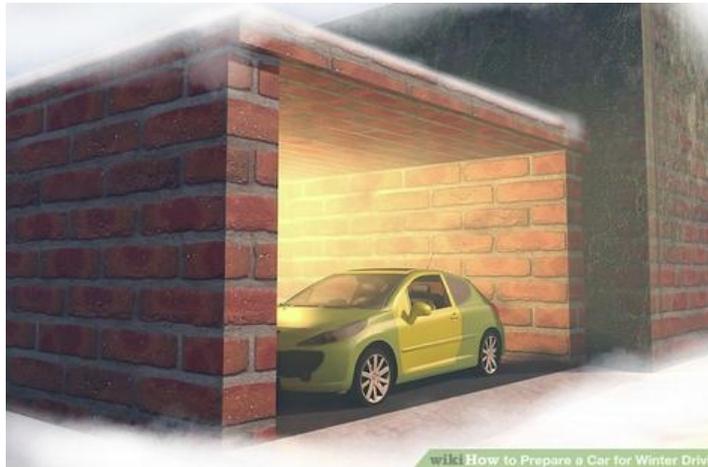
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- 1** Prepare your car for winter driving according to the worst weather you can expect in your area. Winter weather will find the overlooked weakness if your preparation is incomplete.



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2 Check your anti-freeze. Coolant systems that are not in the right proportion will lead to overheating due to freezing. Have the car's coolant system flushed in the fall before the first freeze. You also need to check the system for leaks and install fresh coolant.



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3 If you have a garage, use it for sheltering your car. Protect your paint job, guard against ice on the windshield (see tips), and guard against the fluids and/or water in your radiator from freezing. And, yes, there is such a thing as "gas line freeze". Condensation builds up in the gas line and gas tank, and freezes. (You may want to inquire with an auto parts store about a head bolt heater.)

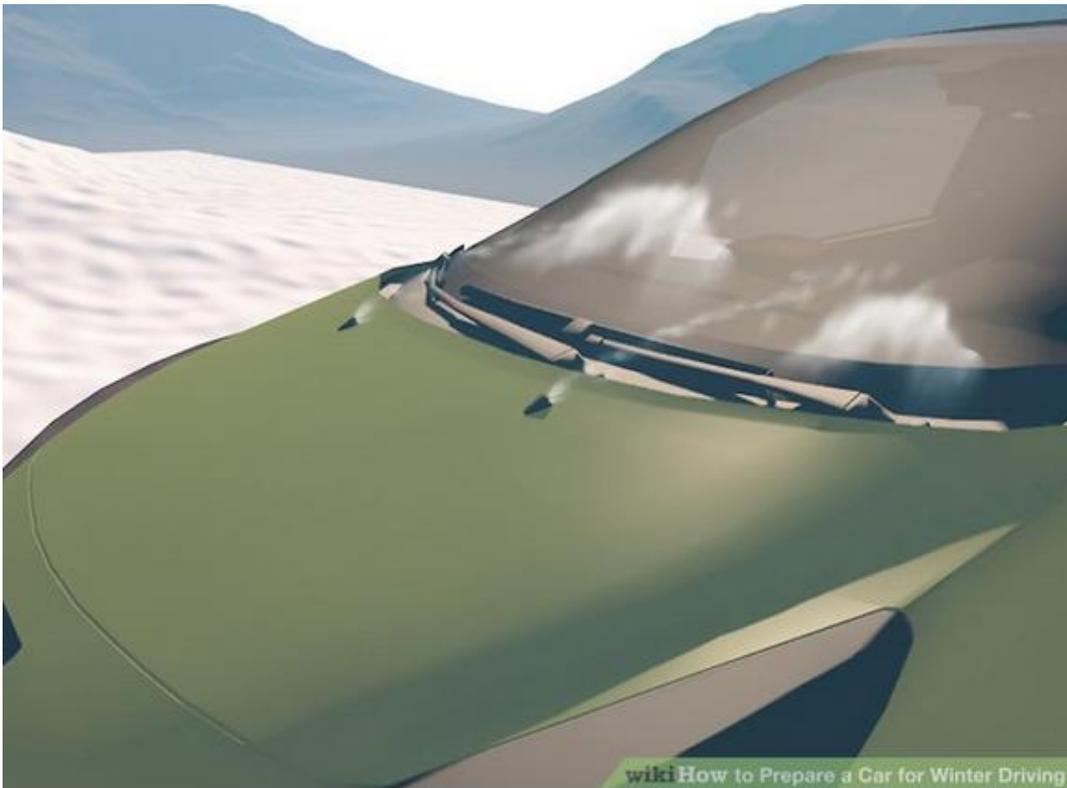
- If you do not have shelter for your car, invest in a car cover. Try to find one that is reversible – with one side a very bright color such as orange, yellow and in neon shades. A car cover will not save you from freezing fluids, but it will keep snow and ice off the windshield and your paint, and help protect your car from salts that might be used on the streets in your community.



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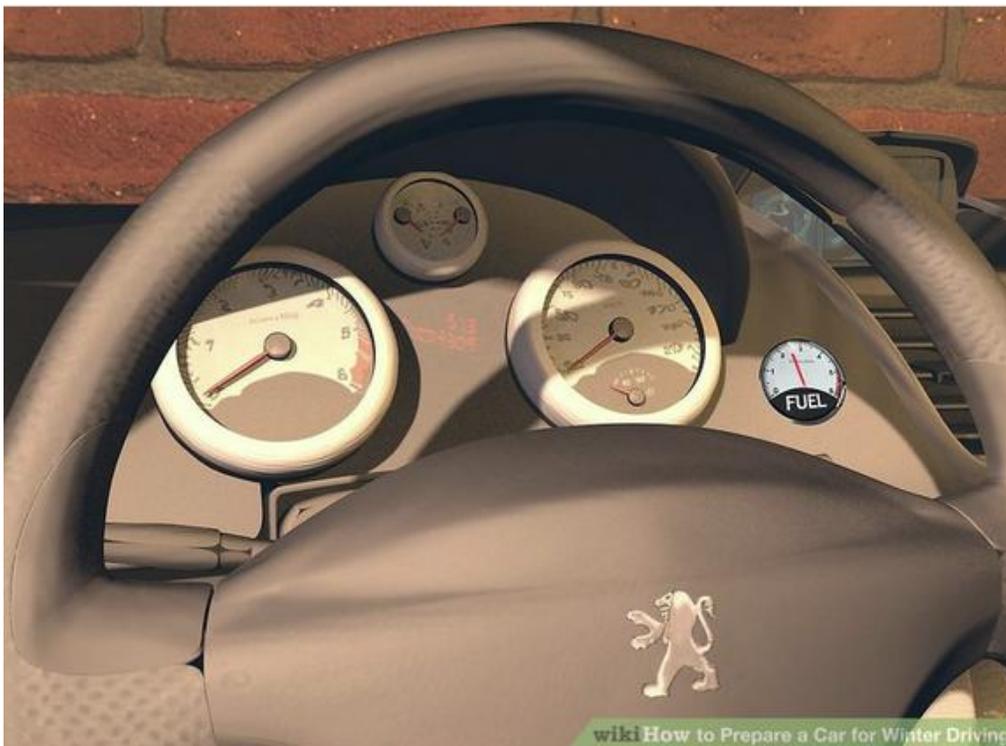
- 4** Confirm that your heater system works correctly and the core doesn't leak, the blower works and the window defroster is operating.



- 5** Inspect the windshield wipers and replace them if they are worn or have become hardened. Change the windshield wiper fluid with one that has antifreeze added to it.



- 6** Examine the car's electrical system, particularly the battery and charging arrangement. The cold weather puts unusual demands on the charging system.



7 Maintain fluids regularly.

- An older car in an area that has temperatures that fall below freezing often uses 30-weight single viscosity oil. You need to go to a lower viscosity oil, like a 10-weight, when the temperature falls below zero and stays there.
- This also applies to your automatic transmission fluid. Higher weight oils and transmission fluids do not lubricate sufficiently in colder weather. Newer automobiles use multi-viscosity oil such as 10 and 30 weights. This eliminates the need to change type of oil.



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8 Expect to have “square tires” after you have had the car sitting for a while. (Like overnight.) The warm air in your tires rises. As it cools the bottom of the tire goes “flat”. This will resolve itself once you begin to drive and the air starts to circulate again. But start off slowly. Consult with a tire retailer about snow tires and chains.

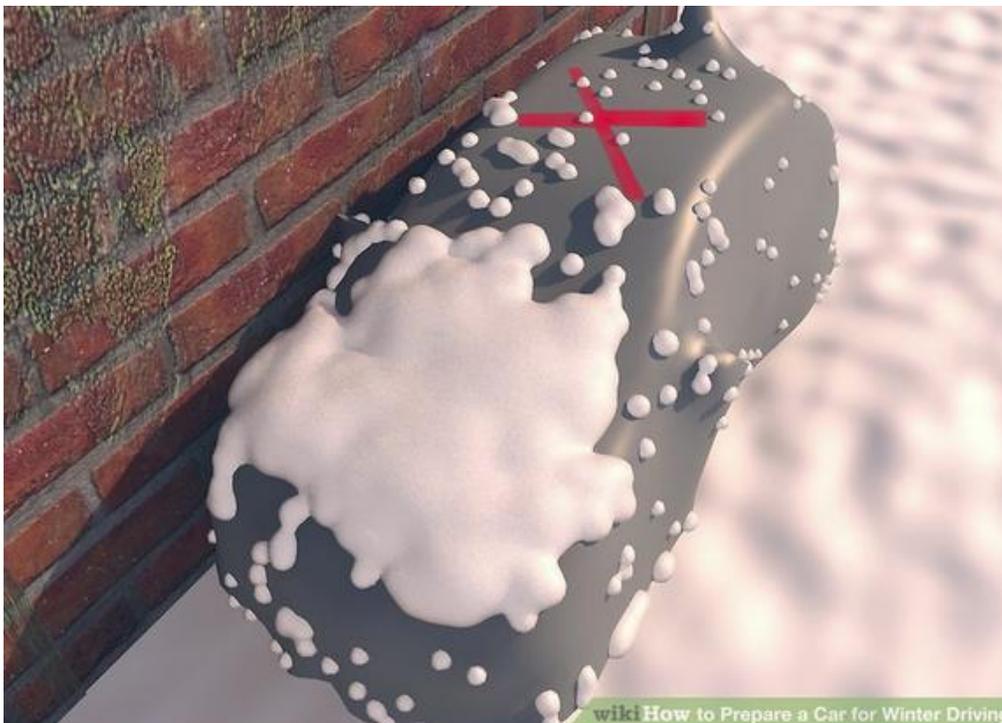
- Ensure traction so you know you are safe when driving on icy roads. Check your vehicle’s tire treads. Replace any tires that do not have sufficient tread. Snow tires may also be a good investment.



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1 Avoid driving in weather conditions such as a blizzard, extreme cold and high winds or in rural areas of your community. Know where you are. Before you leave your starting point, advise a family member, friend or neighbor of your destination and judge the approximate duration of the trip. If possible, contact those persons if you will be delayed. Notify them when you reach your destination.



2 In item number 2, it was noted that a car cover should be of a bright, neon color on one side. If no such item can be found, apply a very large X on the roof section of the car cover. This can be achieved with vinyl, waterproof tape or take the car cover to an upholster to have a durable, highly reflective vinyl X sewn on. On the front and rear sides of the cover, use the same methods to apply your license plate number. When not in use, keep the car cover in the trunk.

3 Prepare an emergency kit to keep in your trunk containing:

- Flares



- Flashlight and batteries (keep in the glove box or inside the vehicle)



- Candles and a lighter or matches (keep them dry in a sealed, plastic bag)

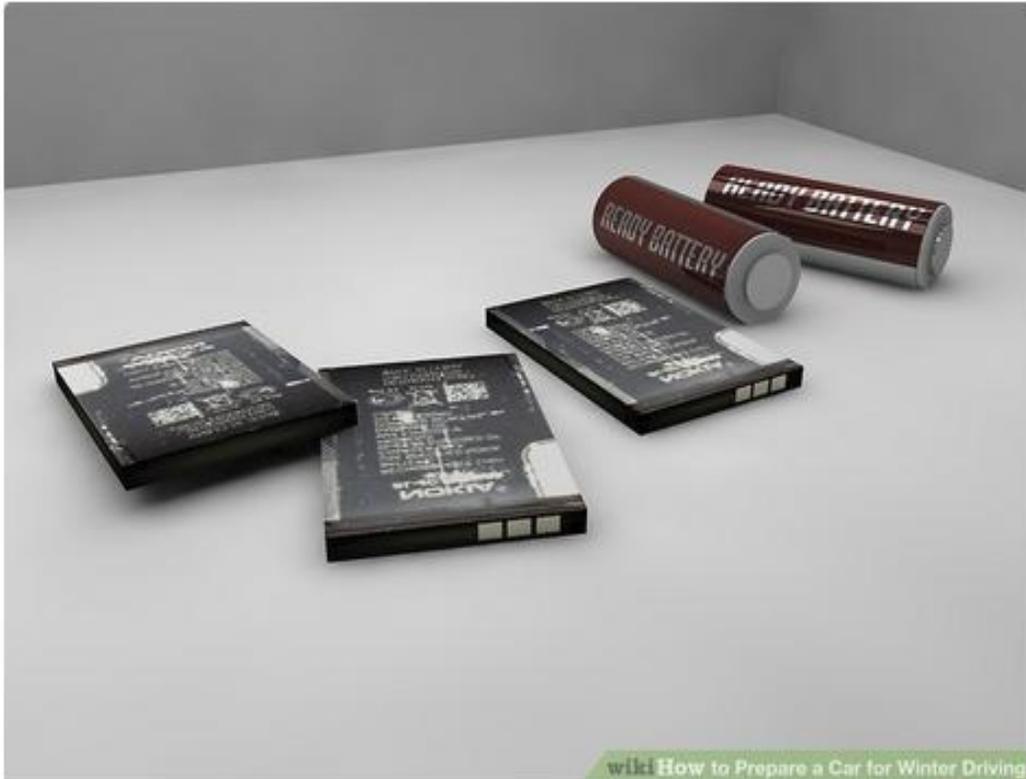


- Battery operated radio

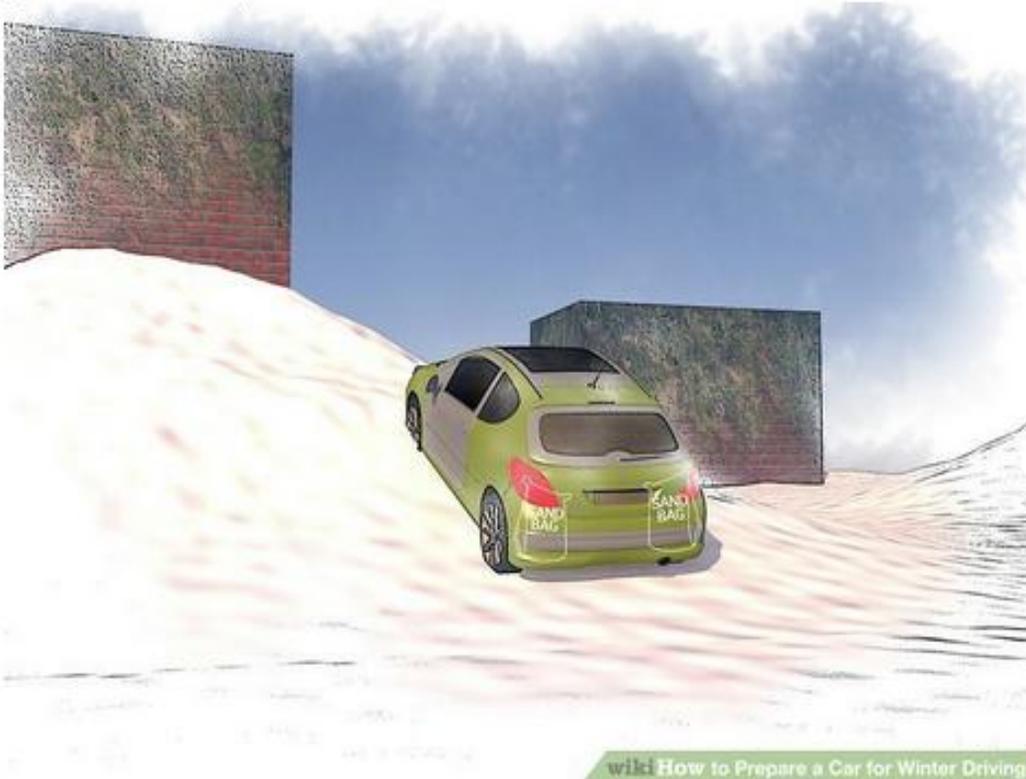


- Spare batteries for your cellphone and flashlight

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- 2 bags of sand (one on each side of the trunk, near the wheel wells. This will provide added traction while driving and the sand can be used around your tires if you become stuck.)



- A camping shovel



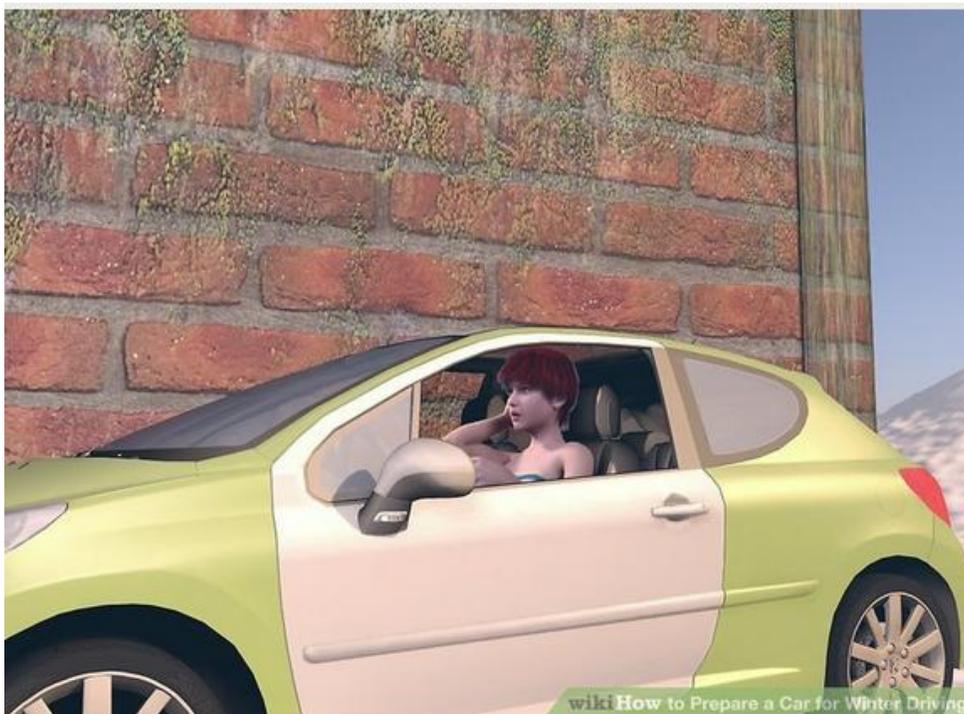
- At least one sleeping bag, preferably one that is down.



- Water



- Foodstuffs that can be eaten cold. (Described in Item number 4.)
- A small First Aid kit
- A small tool kit, a jack that works and a spare tire in usable condition, and jumper cables.



4 If you become stranded in your car, **FIRST** test your cell phone. If it has reception, call an emergency number first, then call the persons that are aware of your route and your travel time schedule. Test the cell phone periodically. **Do not try to walk over for help.** Exit the car **ONLY** to recover items from the trunk.



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5 Put the car cover on the vehicle with the bright, reflective X side out. Position the X on the roof the best you can. The car cover will help retain heat inside the car and repel the cold, wind, and drafts. If you are in a severe situation, the reflective X can be seen by aircraft that may be conducting a search for you. Your license plate numbers will be visible to a search and rescue team working on the ground.

Tips

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- Tire chains on the drive wheels increase the traction for acceleration and stopping. Add chains to the other two wheels to maximize your ability to control your car on icy roads.
- Practice putting on tire chains in your driveway. This makes the job easier when the time comes.

Things You'll Need

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- Oil
- Windscreen washer fluid with coolant
- Anti-freeze
- Tire chains
- Emergency kit complete with candles, matches, power snack bars, a pocket knife, a thermal blanket or sleeping bag, a flashlight, a folding shovel and a sweater or jacket

Source Link: <https://www.wikihow.com/Prepare-a-Car-for-Winter-Driving>