



Winter Preparedness Tips

“There is no bad weather, only inappropriate clothing.”

Winter weather can be very challenging. Besides the obvious winter clothing, your home and your car will need some extra attention prior to the first flakes of the season. Winter is the most difficult driving season due to many reasons, including ice, snow, lower temperatures and fewer daylight hours. Winter storms can cause roads to be impassible for hours, and your home may even lose power...and possibly heat, so best be prepared.

General Tips

- Have an emergency supply of water, food and extra batteries in your home.
- If possible, stay home until the roads are clear after a heavy snowfall.
- Never turn your heat below 55 degrees in the winter months when you are away.
- Buy at least 2 snow shovels. Look for a quality, sturdy shovel, as northern climates' snow can be very heavy.
- Consider contracting a snow-removal team before you need it. Even if you have a service, it is recommended that you have a shovel in case of emergency.
- A portable phone charger battery will also save you in a pinch if you lose power in your home

Home winterization (Check with the landlord to see who is responsible):

- Clean gutters in late fall, prior to colder weather. Make sure gutters are clean and free of standing water.
- The pipes that go to your exterior faucets may need to be drained
- An outdoor sprinkler system will need to be drained in the fall.
- Routinely change the heating filters, especially in cold weather climates (monthly).
- Clear snow and ice build-up from outdoor vents, such as from the dryer and furnace.
- The furnace should be checked yearly at the beginning of the heating season to be sure it is proper order.
- Disconnect and take hoses inside

Driving and Car Care winter tips:

- Always have an ice-scraper in your car that you can easily access.
- Keep a winter emergency kit in the car: winter boots, mittens, hats, blanket, flashlight and a shovel accessible in front seat of car. Trunks can freeze shut during ice storms.
- Run your car for 10-15 min before driving depending on the outdoor temperature.
- Remove all snow and ice from your vehicle. Clear all windows, headlights, and taillights. Do not start driving until your windshield is defrosted and clear.
- Make sure you clear off the front intake vent of your car. It seems strange to think of a car overheating in the winter, but poor airflow can cause big problems.
- Never have the gas tank below half.
- If you get stuck and can't get out, run the engine only for brief times and open a window to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning. Make sure the tailpipe is free of snow and debris.
- Carry extra water in your car. You can last longer without food than water and staying hydrated in the cold is key.
- Check your car's Antifreeze, as it keeps your vehicle's radiator water from freezing.
- Fill your car's windshield washer. Never put water on the windshield since it will freeze over.
- Check your windshield wipers for signs of aging and cracking. Replace if necessary.
- Snow tires may also be necessary in your area (snow tires are more effective than all-season tires, which lose their elasticity and grip at about 20 degrees).
- Brake slowly. Gentle braking in slow, steady strokes helps you find out how much traction you have. Begin braking early when you come to an intersection or stop.
- Approach bridges, shaded spots, overpasses and turns with caution. These areas freeze first and may remain icy after the rest of the roadway is clear and dry.

Sample US Cities [average temperature](#) in January:

City	High °F/°C	Low °F/°C
Chicago, IL	31/-1	17/-9
Minneapolis, MN	24/-5	8/-14
Philadelphia, PA	40/5	26/-4
Washington, DC	43/6	29/-2