Adjusting to Bad Driving Conditions – Snow Meeting Kit

WHAT'S AT STAKE

"Adjusting to Bad Driving Conditions – Snow" means modifying your driving behavior and techniques to safely navigate and cope with the challenges posed by snowy road conditions. Adjusting to these conditions involves adopting specific driving practices and precautions to minimize the risk of accidents and ensure your safety.

WHAT'S THE DANGER

HAZARDS OF BAD DRIVING CONDITIONS IN SNOW

- **Reduced Traction:** Snow and ice on the road reduce the friction between the tires and the road surface.
- **Limited Visibility:** Snowfall can reduce visibility, making it difficult to see other vehicles and road markings.
- **Black Ice:** Black ice refers to a thin, transparent layer of ice that forms on the road surface.
- **Snowdrifts:** Accumulated snow on the road can form drifts, obstructing the path and reducing road width.
- **Snowplows and Winter Maintenance Vehicles:** Snowplows and other winter maintenance vehicles are essential for keeping roads clear, but they can also be hazardous for drivers.
- **Slush and Sleet:** As snow melts and refreezes or mixes with rain, it can create slush and sleet on the road surface, which are slippery and reduce vehicle traction.
- **Icy Roads**: Snowmelt during the day can refreeze into ice patches on the road during colder nighttime temperatures, making driving treacherous.
- **Road Congestion and Delays:** Snowy conditions can lead to traffic congestion, especially during peak.
- **Car Accidents:** Slippery road conditions increase the risk of

accidents, including collisions with other vehicles, roadside obstacles, or pedestrians.

- **Road Closures:** In severe snowstorms, roads may become impassable, leading to closures and detours. This can disrupt travel plans and cause inconvenience to drivers.
- **Stranded Vehicles:** Vehicles may become stuck or stranded in deep snow, causing further traffic disruptions and creating safety hazards.
- **Health Risks:** Getting stuck in a snowstorm or an accident in cold weather can expose drivers and passengers to the risk of hypothermia and frostbite.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

BEST DRIVING PRACTICES IN SNOWY CONDITIONS

- **Slow Down:** Reduce your speed and avoid sudden acceleration, braking, or turns.
- **Increase Following Distance:** Keep more space between your car and the vehicle in front of you.
- **Brake Smoothly:** If your vehicle has an anti-lock braking system (ABS), maintain consistent pressure and let the system do the work. If your car doesn’t have ABS, pump the brakes gently to prevent skidding.
- **Accelerate Gradually:** When starting from a stop, apply gentle pressure to the gas pedal to avoid wheel spin.
- **Avoid Cruise Control:** Do not use cruise control on slippery roads.
- **Use Lower Gears:** If your vehicle has a manual transmission, use a lower gear when driving in snow.
- **Be Cautious on Hills:** When going uphill, apply steady and consistent pressure on the gas pedal. When descending, use lower gears to control your speed instead of relying solely on the brakes.
- **Clear Snow and Ice:** Before driving, clear all snow and ice from your windows, mirrors, headlights, and taillights.
- **Be Aware of Black Ice:** Be particularly cautious of “black ice,” which is a thin, transparent layer of ice.
- **Stay Informed:** Check weather reports and road conditions

before your journey.

- **Maintain Your Vehicle:** Ensure your car is in good condition, with adequate tire tread depth and pressure.
- **Plan Ahead:** Give yourself extra time to reach your destination, so you don’t feel rushed.

ESSENTIAL TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT TO ADJUST TO BAD DRIVING CONDITIONS

- **Winter Tires:** Winter or snow tires have a different tread pattern and rubber compound designed to provide better traction on icy and snowy roads.
- **Tire Chains:** Tire chains or snow chains are metal chains that you can wrap around your tires to enhance traction on extremely slippery surfaces.
- **Ice Scraper and Snow Brush:** An ice scraper is essential for removing ice and frost from your car’s windows, while a snow brush helps clear snow from the rest of your vehicle.
- **Snow Shovel:** Keep a snow shovel in your car to dig out your tires if you get stuck in deep snow. A collapsible or compact shovel is more convenient for storage.
- **Sand:** Carry a bag of sand to improve traction under your tires if you’re stuck on ice or snow.
- **Tow Straps or Chains:** If your vehicle gets stuck and needs assistance, having tow straps or chains can be helpful for other drivers to help pull you out of the snow.
- **Jumper Cables:** Having jumper cables in your vehicle allows you to jump-start your car or help others.
- **Emergency Kit:** Put together an emergency kit that includes items like a first aid kit, flashlight, blankets, extra warm clothing, snacks, water, and other essential supplies in case you become stranded.
- **Cell Phone and Charger:** Keep a fully charged cell phone with you in case of emergencies.
- **GPS or Navigation System:** A GPS or navigation system with up-to-date traffic and weather information can help you plan alternative routes and stay informed about road conditions.
- **Anti-freeze Windshield Washer Fluid:** Ensure your windshield washer fluid is rated for low temperatures and contains antifreeze to prevent it from freezing on your windshield.

- **Full Tank of Gas:** Keep your gas tank at least half full during winter.

FINAL WORD

By being proactive and making necessary changes to your driving habits, you contribute to a safer driving environment and help prevent accidents and their potential consequences.