

# 2020 WINTER VEHICLE SAFETY & MAINTENANCE

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## WINTER MAINTENANCE Checklist for Your Vehicle

The following is a list of instructions you should take to prepare your car for the winter season

1. Have a set of four high quality winter tires installed. Thanks to their deep tread and soft compound, winter tires are vastly superior to all-season tires for winter driving, and should be installed regardless of whether your car is rear-wheel drive, front-wheel drive, or all-wheel drive. They should ideally be installed on their own set of steel rims, and checked for proper balance, alignment, and tire pressure.
2. This is a good time to have your car thoroughly checked over as problems tend to become more apparent when winter rolls around. Have the belts, hoses, brakes, and suspension all checked for wear and proper function. Road salt and slush can take their toll on some of these components, which is why they should be inspected carefully.
3. Make sure all the vital fluids are clean and topped up. The coolant should be checked for strength and quality to ensure the cooling system will function properly. If the coolant is more than 5 years old, consider a full cooling system flush. The windshield washer system should be filled with freeze resistant windshield washer fluid and the windshield wiper blades should be inspected and replaced if necessary.
4. If your vehicle is due for an oil change, perform a full oil and filter change. Generally this should take place approximately every 6 months or 8,000km, however, the interval does vary from vehicle to vehicle. Follow the severe maintenance schedule in your vehicle's owner's manual when in doubt. Synthetic oil is recommended over mineral oil in most vehicles because it helps ease engine starting on those cold mornings, as well as improves overall engine protection.
5. The cold temperatures of winter put a lot of strain on your car's battery. No one wants to get stuck in a cold parking lot with a dead battery, which is why you should have the battery checked and load tested for proper functioning. Also, have the charging system, aka the alternator, checked to make sure that it is charging the battery properly. As a general guide, car batteries usually last 4-5 years, so consider having your battery changed if it is older than that.
6. Make sure that all the instruments, lights, electronics, and heater controls are all operating properly.
7. It is a good idea to prepare for winter emergencies and carry a compact shovel, road salt, a bottle of windshield washer fluid, and a first aid kit and some water when you know you will be driving in bad weather.

Article courtesy carhelpcanada.com



### CAA Suggested winter driving kit:

- Warm winter gloves, toque and boots
- Blanket or extra clothing
- Bag of sand or kitty litter
- Small shovel
- Ice scraper and/or snow brush
- Snacks for energy
- Extra windshield washer fluid
- First aid kit
- Hardcopy local map (not just a GPS unit)
- Flashlight and batteries
- Flares
- Waterproof matches
- Battery jumper cables

Here are five vehicle maintenance tips to consider that will keep your vehicle running efficiently and reduce its environmental impact:

- **KEEP YOUR VEHICLE PROPERLY TUNED FOR OPTIMUM PERFORMANCE.** Regular tune-ups and maintenance will help your vehicle pollute less and burn less fuel. A tune-up can improve gas mileage by an average of four percent, while fixing a serious maintenance issue, such as a faulty oxygen sensor, can improve gas mileage by up to 40 percent. If the temperature drops below -15°C consider using a block heater. This reduces stress on your vehicle's engine and heats up the cabin quicker.
- **CHECK YOUR TIRES.** Tires that are not properly inflated require your engine to work harder to move your vehicle and, therefore, to burn more gas. This increases fuel costs and increases the risk of engine damage. Check your vehicle's owner's manual to find its optimal tire pressure, and check the pressure whenever there are significant changes in temperature. Take your car in for a checkup, especially if you plan on taking long road-trips.
- **CHECK YOUR VEHICLE'S GAS CAP.** Gas caps that are loose, damaged or missing can cause gas to evaporate, which harms the environment and increases your number of visits to the gas station
- **REPLACE DIRTY AIR FILTERS.** An air filter that is clogged with dirt and dust causes your vehicle to burn more fuel for the same amount of air intake, leading to wasted gas and power loss in the engine. Replacing a clogged air filter can improve your vehicle's efficiency by up to 10 percent.
- **HAVE SPARK PLUGS CHECKED AND REPLACED IF NECESSARY.** Spark plugs wear out over time, and as they get older, they lose their ability to spark properly. This affects your engine's performance and results in a loss of power. A misfiring spark plug can reduce your vehicle's fuel efficiency by up to 30 percent

Article Courtesy CAA

**READY FOR WINTER?**

Put together an emergency roadside kit!

WE CARRY:

- Emergency Roadside Kits
- Collapsible Shovel
- Emergency Blanket
- Batteries
- Handwarmers & gloves
- Wooden matches
- Emergency Candles

**Home hardware**

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### KEEP SAFE THIS WINTER

Since weather is unpredictable, plan ahead to make your trip as safe as possible. Check roads and weather before your trip at drivebc.ca

Remember that from October 1 to April 20, drivers are required to use winter tires on many highways in B.C. Winter tires have been defined as those labeled with either the mountain/snowflake symbol or the mud and snow (M+S) designation. Signs are posted on each of the designated highways to advise motorists where winter tires are required so please keep an eye out for them

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