

# Drive safe this winter!



Remember to dislodge any snow stuck to your headlights so oncoming vehicles can see you. /PIXABAY



It's a good idea to tune-up your vehicle and install and balance your winter tires before winter weather hits. /PIXABAY

Every day thousands of people are on BC roads driving for either work or personal necessity. Our driving skills are pushed to the limit when winter weather – fog, rain, snow and ice make roads more hazardous.

Winter conditions can be challenging for even the most experienced driver. A driver's chances of being injured or killed in a crash dramatically increase during BC's winter driving season.

Motor vehicle crashes increase during winter months:

- In BC, the average number of crashes in which someone is killed or injured due to driving too fast for the conditions more than doubles from fall to early winter – from 99 in September to 220 in December.
- The winter months of November, December, and January are a particularly dangerous time for people who drive for work, with nearly 28 per cent of all work-related crashes resulting in injury and time loss occurring during these months.

### How Does Your Region Compare?

- **Lower Mainland** – Casualty crashes increase 48 per cent from approximately 50 in September to 74 in December.

- **Northern Central** – Casualty crashes increase nearly fourfold from approximately 8 in September to 31 in December.
- **Southern Interior** – Casualty crashes increase nearly fourfold from approximately 22 in September to 79 in December.
- **Vancouver Island** – Casualty crashes nearly double from approximately 19 in September to 37 in December.

### Where and when are winter tires required?

Winter tires or chains are required on most routes in British Columbia from October 1 to April 30th.

### Why winter tires?

Winter tires provide better traction and stopping performance than summer tires in cold temperatures and on wet, snowy, and icy roads. And traction may be the difference between safely driving on winter roads and being involved in a serious crash. Check the wear of your winter tires before installing and monitor tire pressure often as it can drop in cold weather.

### What is the legal requirement for winter tires?

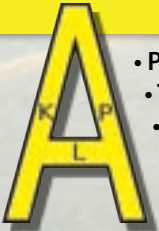
Both the all-season Mud and Snow (M+S) tires and the 3-peaked mountain/snowflake tires meet the legal requirements for winter tire designation in B.C. In all cases, a winter tire must be in good condition, with a minimum tread depth of 3.5 mm (5/32").

Tires with a 3-peaked mountain and snowflake symbol offer the best traction on snow, ice, and in cold weather. They provide good winter driving performance, especially in harsh winter conditions. The tire industry indicates winter tires with the 3-peaked mountain and snowflake symbol outperform Mud and Snow (M+S) tires at temperatures of 7°C or lower. The natural rubber compound in these tires helps them to stay soft and flexible in colder temperatures.

All-season tires with the M+S (Mud and Snow) symbol offer better traction than summer tires and meet the minimum legal requirement for a winter tire. But, in severe winter conditions, they are less effective than the 3-peaked mountain and snowflake tires.

Summer tires are not recommended for driving between October 1 and March 31 and chains on summer tires are not an acceptable

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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](http://drivebc.ca)

Remember that from October 1 to April 30, 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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substitute for legal winter tires on signed B.C. highways.

Use four matched winter tires

Make sure that all four winter tires are evenly matched in size, tread type and depth; however – you must have at least two matching winter tires on the primary drive axle even when driving a 4X4 vehicle. If you use different types of tires, it compromises stability and could cause your vehicle to fishtail.

Stopping distances in winter weather

Rain, slush, snow, ice and cold temperatures are all part of winter driving. Stopping your passenger vehicle in these conditions can be challenging, as your tires have less traction on cold and often slippery road surfaces.

Chains and other traction devices

Passenger Vehicles  
Passenger vehicles may use alternative traction devices such as chains with their winter tires. Before using these devices, test them for performance in winter conditions.

Commercial Vehicles  
If you operate a commercial vehicle and travel outside the Greater Vancouver and Greater Victoria areas, you are required to carry tire chains (or other suitable traction devices) and comply with road signage and all traffic laws. Carriers must take steps to ensure their drivers are prepared for winter conditions and know when and how to safely and properly install chains or other approved traction devices.

Enforcement of winter tires and chains

While winter tires are not mandatory province-wide, they are required on a majority of B.C. highways. Drivers without the proper winter tires in good condition driving on designated B.C. highways can receive a fine of \$121.



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Oct 1-Apr 30



**MUST USE  
WINTER TIRES**


 M+S

October 1-April 30



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LICENSED GVW**

**WINTER TIRES  
OR  
CARRY CHAINS**




**OVER 11,794 kg  
LICENSED GVW**

**MUST CARRY  
TIRE  
CHAINS**

Winter tires are mandatory on most highways outside the Lower Mainland between Oct 1st and April 30th. Those without winter tires can face a fine of \$121. /BC GOV

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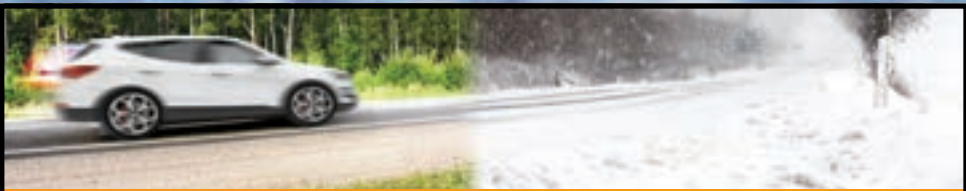
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