

Even experienced drivers can find their nerves and skills tested by winter road conditions.

HERE ARE SOME TIPS TO HELP YOU DRIVE SAFELY AS THE WEATHER TURNS COLD:

- Before beginning your trip, know the current road conditions and weather forecast. For statewide highway information 24 hours a day, call 511 or go to 511virginia.org. You can also call the VDOT Customer Service Center 800-FOR-ROAD (800-367-7623).
- Make sure your vehicle is ready for winter. Be sure to check your:
 - Brakes and tires
 - Battery and ignition system
 - Antifreeze and thermostat
 - Windshield wipers and de-icing washer fluid
 - Headlights, tail and brake lights, blinkers and emergency flashers
 - Exhaust system, heater and defroster
 - Oil
- Properly lubricate door locks prone to freezing.
- Keep your car's windows, mirrors and lights clear of snow and ice.
- Always wear your seat belt.
- Leave a few minutes early.
- Start out slowly in the lowest gear recommended by your vehicle's manufacturer.
- Be aware of potentially icy areas such as shady spots and bridges.
- Keep a safe distance of at least five seconds behind other vehicles and trucks that are plowing the road.
- Don't pass a snowplow or spreader unless it is absolutely necessary. Treat these as you would emergency response vehicles.
- Keep an emergency winter driving kit in your car.
- Drive smart and pay close attention.