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GET PREPARED FOR YOUR FIRST CANADIAN WINTER



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Canadian winters don't hold back, and that stormy weather can make even the most experienced drivers nervous. Unfortunately, the winter months take a toll on our cars and the roads, making it difficult to get from A to B. Although winter can be unpredictable and dangerous, there are a few things that you can do to prepare your car, and yourself for winter.



PREPARING YOUR CAR

Getting your car prepared for winter is the first step in winter safety. As the winter season arrives, bring your vehicle to your dealership and have a winter maintenance check up to ensure that your car is in good shape inside and out.

The most important preparation is to install winter tires and while mud and snow tires are acceptable, they don't have the same performance abilities in harsh winter conditions. Also, don't forget to switch your wiper blades to protect from ice and snow!

Make sure to keep your gas tank full as you hit the road. This isn't just to save you time along the way, but also to prevent moisture from forming inside the tank which can freeze and cause serious harm to your car.

And always, always make sure to remove any snow and ice from your car before going on the roads. This isn't just for your safety, but the safety of others driving around you.



WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR YOUR SAFETY

Yes, the winter weather is unpredictable, but there are steps you can take to help ensure your safety while driving in the snow.

Ensure you are familiar with the route you are driving and keep an eye on the weather you'll be encountering. Keep your plans flexible in case driving becomes too dangerous due to inclement weather. You need to be confident on the road and if the weather makes you uncomfortable, stay in and stay off the roads until the conditions become more stable.

Try your best to always have a cell phone with you that is charged and accessible. This will be the easiest way for you to get into contact with someone if you run into trouble. Do not use the phone while driving but have it in the vehicle or sync it to your vehicle's hands-free in-car voice navigation system.

If you're going on a long drive, call someone you know before you head out and let them know you'll check in when you get to your destination, or along the way. This is a great step to take especially if you're traveling alone. You should always travel with an emergency kit in your car, but you can add to it in the colder months to have it also act as your emergency winter weather kit. You should have a spare tire and the tools needed for your car, but in the winter you can add extra clothing, winter gear like gloves, a shovel and flashlight with extra batteries. Since it gets dark early in the winter, that additional lighting could make a huge difference if you get stuck and need to find anything in your vehicle.

Enjoy your first winter driving in Canada!