**How to Stay Warm in Your Car During A Winter Storm**

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Winter weather can wreak havoc on travel plans. Every year we read of canceled flights and closed roads due to ice and snow. It’s always a good idea to check the weather before a road trip, but severe winter storms don't always follow predictable patterns.

An unexpected wind shift and temperature change can turn a small flurry into heavy snowfall in no time. Snowdrifts and icy conditions could cause you to be stuck in your car until help arrives. It's already happened to many people. Recently, [**winter weather shut down I-83**](https://www.abc27.com/news/local/winter-weather-shuts-down-stretch-of-i-83-stuck-cars-and-trucks-in-gridlock/1600303401), causing several people to be stranded in their cars.

If that happened to you, would you be nice and warm, or would you be cold and scared? Here are some tips to help you stay warm in case your car gets stuck in a winter storm.

Supplies To Get

Here are some [**supplies**](https://urbansurvivalsite.com/auto/supplies) to have in your vehicle as emergency preparation.

**Blankets** – Keep several warm blankets in your car. [**Emergency thermal blankets**](https://amzn.to/2zdUwtP) are also a good idea. These compact blankets help you retain body heat and are reusable, windproof, and waterproof.

**Extra Layers of Clothes** – Stow hats, [**gloves**](https://urbansurvivalsite.com/auto/gloves), jackets and scarves in your vehicle. You can layer them on top of what you’re wearing or use them to replace wet items during a storm.

**Emergency Road Kit** – You can create your own or buy a pre-assembled [**emergency kit**](https://amzn.to/2DHkycP) that contains booster cables, road flares, [**flashlight**](https://urbansurvivalsite.com/auto/flashlight), [**first aid supplies**](https://urbansurvivalsite.com/first-aid-supplies-survival/), electrical tape, and small tools.

**Tire Sealant** – Let’s face it, winter is hard on tires. A container of [**tire sealant**](https://amzn.to/2DGr3g1) can help you get to a safe place where you can change your tire or get help.

**Hand Warmers** – These single-use [**hand warmers**](https://amzn.to/2DplLVf) provide up to 18 hours of heat. You simply shake them to activate the warmth.

**Emergency**[**Candles**](https://urbansurvivalsite.com/auto/emergencycandles) – When you can’t run your car for long stretches, the darkness can be overwhelming and a bit depressing on long winter nights. These [**emergency candles**](https://amzn.to/2QPoNpB) are just as useful when stranded in your vehicle as they are during a black-out at home. They have storage caps to prevent spills.

Non-perishable snacks and plenty of [**water**](https://urbansurvivalsite.com/auto/waterfreedomsystem).

What To Do Before You Leave

Although we can’t always know when brutal weather can strike, there are some common-sense steps you can take before you leave on a road trip.

Check weather reports before you leave. Don't go out if bad weather is coming.

If you must go out, tell someone your route, destination, and expected arrival time.

Make sure your cell phone is fully charged and you have a [**battery**](https://urbansurvivalsite.com/auto/batteries)-powered charger.

Remember to heat up your vehicle for a few minutes before you leave.

Ensure your tires have adequate tread or that you have chains or studs if required where you are traveling.

Try to keep your gas tank full. Never let it go below half empty.

Fasten your seatbelt. This should become a habit if it isn't already.

Winter Driving Tips

Here are some winter driving tips to help keep you out of harm’s way.

When driving on snow or ice, accelerate and decelerate very slowly. It takes a long time to slow down on icy roads.

Drive slowly. Saving a few minutes by driving fast isn't worth the risk. If the people behind you don't like it, they can go around or get over it.

Keep plenty of space between you and the car in front of you.

Don't try to speed up on hills, as this could cause your tires to spin. Instead, get some inertia going before you reach the hill and let it take you to the top. Never stop on a hill if you don't have to.

Be careful on bridges as they ice over more quickly.

Never use cruise control on a slippery surface, whether from [**water**](https://urbansurvivalsite.com/auto/waterfreedomsystem), snow, or ice.

What To Do If You Get Stuck

Now that all that's out of the way, it's time to talk about what to do if your car gets stuck in harsh winter weather.

**Remain Calm** – The first step is to assess the situation calmly. If you've been in a collision, first check to see if you and your passengers are hurt. Next, check your vehicle for damage and determine what is preventing you from moving. Call 911 or a tow truck depending on the severity of your situation.

**Stay In Your Car** – If you can get your vehicle running and need to wait for help, it is often the safest option to stay in the vehicle. Unless it is in a location where it could be hit by other moving vehicles, your car provides needed [**shelter**](https://urbansurvivalsite.com/auto/easycellar) during a storm. Place roadside flares near your car, so other drivers and rescue vehicles can find you.

**Signal For Help** – Tie a brightly covered cloth to your antenna or put it at the top of a rolled up window. At night, leave the dome light on as it doesn't take much power. These things will signal rescuers that you need help.

**Don't Waste Gas** – A car’s interior can lose heat quickly, though, so one of your first concerns will be staying warm. If your engine is in working order, you can run it to get some heat. However, you should not run it longer than 15 minutes each hour to save gas. Be sure to turn off lights, radio, and accessories when the car is not running.

**Check Your Tailpipe** – Before you run your engine, however, take the time to check that snow is not blocking your exhaust pipe. Clear any snow or ice away from the area, since a blocked tailpipe can release poisonous monoxide gas into the car. If it is still snowing outside, re-check the tailpipe every time you turn on the heater.

**Bundle Up** – The more you cover up, the better. You should have blankets in your vehicle, but if you don't, use anything you can find–newspapers, floor mats, etc.

**Keep Hydrated** – Did you know that staying hydrated can help keep you warm and lessen the chance of getting hypothermia? If you don’t have enough [**water**](https://urbansurvivalsite.com/auto/waterfreedomsystem) in your car, however, you can collect snow for melting and drinking. Avoid eating snow in solid form as it can lower your core body temperature. Instead, wait for it to melt.

**Huddle Up** – Sitting close together will help you and your passengers stay warmer. (If your dog is along, cuddle up with Fido for warmth as well.)

**Move** – Encourage each other to move arms, legs, feet and hands at frequent intervals to keep circulation and to help stay warm.