

Driving in Snow

Before setting off ask: Is this journey really necessary?

Always, but especially if the journey is long, you must prepare the car properly, this could easily take 30 minutes:

Before you leave the house:..

- Fully charge your mobile phone
- Plan your route. Listen for media road and weather announcements
- Tell someone where you're going, and what time you expect to be back
- Consider taking a shovel and some sacks in case the wheels get stuck
- Take spare warm jumpers, jackets and hats
- Don't forget a warm flask and some food



As for the car itself...

- Are the windows and light casings completely clear of snow and ice? at the back as well?
- Remove snow from the roof. It may slide down over your windscreen
- Make sure the wipers are unfrozen and able to move
- Top up the window washer reservoir (and take extra in the boot)
- Warm the engine before starting to move
- Demist the windows BEFORE starting off
- Make sure you have enough FUEL to complete your journey, with plenty of extra incase of likely delays
- Wiper washer may instantly freeze if the car is cold rendering you temporarily blind
- Air conditioning will keep the windows clear (on the inside)

Car control

Moving Off

Move off in as high a gear as possible. The nearer the car is to a stall, the better grip you have. This may be 2nd gear. Using first gear may cause wheel spin, and dig you in a bit deeper.

Approaching junctions, you may not be able to see road markings, neither may the other drivers! Keep well back from the car in front!

Braking

Vehicle without ABS are likely to lock their front wheels, which means they may not be able to steer. Having ABS does not mean you can afford to drive close to the car in front! Your stopping distance may be 10 times the norm.

Plan ahead and slow down much earlier than normal, and consider using the gears to slow (using clutch braking). This will reduce the likelihood of wheel lock.

Avoid harsh braking!

Steering

Avoid harsh and sudden steering. The wheels may slip.

Plan ahead for bends and corners so your speed is correct BEFORE the steering is required. Sudden steering may have no effect whatsoever, as the wheels will not have time to grip. This may send you off the road edge.

Avoid surprises!

As with driving in any weather, you should avoid being surprised.

But in snow, failure to notice soon enough the brake lights of the car in front (for example) could easily result in a rear end shunt. This is because your brakes won't work in the way they normally do.

