

# DON'T BE LEFT OUT IN THE COLD

Prepare your vehicle for wintry weather before snow begins to fall and note these must-have items and maintenance tips.

## TEN ESSENTIAL ITEMS TO KEEP IN YOUR TRUNK THIS WINTER

1. First-aid kit and essential medications
2. Non-perishable food and bottled water
3. A wool blanket and extra clothing, such as snow boots, gloves, pants and coat
4. A flashlight with spare batteries
5. An ice scraper and a stiff-bristled brush
6. Extra de-icing windshield washer fluid
7. A heavy-duty compact shovel that can dig through ice
8. Rock salt to melt ice
9. Jumper cables to help revive a dead battery
10. A reflective triangle to place behind your car in the event it becomes stranded

## TEN STEPS TO SAFEGUARD YOUR VEHICLE FROM SEASONAL SLIP-UPS

1. **Check the battery.** Have your service department check how much life is left in your battery and ensure that oxidation has not built up on the battery connections.
2. **Check your mileage/date since your last oil change.** Oil changes are typically recommended every 3,000 to 5,000 miles or every three months to prolong the life of the vehicle. You can determine your car's need by checking the owner's manual.
3. **Check other fluids.** Review your owner's manual to see how frequently it's recommended that you flush the radiator and replace the radiator fluid. Also, make sure you have enough windshield washer fluid before pulling out of the driveway.

4. **Check your wiper blades.** Examine the effectiveness of your wiper blades and replace them if needed; this is relatively easy and inexpensive.
5. **Check tires.** Cold winter air can decrease tire air pressure by as much as eight pounds, so you should regularly examine your tires during winter months to prevent flats. You should also keep an eye on your tire tread and consider investing in snow tires if you travel frequently during the winter.
6. **Check belts.** Replace worn, cracked or frayed belts before they break or cause a breakdown.
7. **Check the alternator, starter, brakes, heater, defroster and exhaust systems.** While all should be in working order, these can be problematic during winter months, especially the exhaust system. A worn or damaged system may cause harmful exhaust fumes to seep into passenger areas.
8. **Keep your gas tank full.** Reduce the amount of moisture that can build up and cause the vehicle to stall.
9. **Scrape ice and snow off your windows.** Limited visibility increases risks.
10. **Add weight to the trunk.** Cargo that won't shift in your trunk can help increase traction in the snow and prevent incidents of fishtailing or your tires from spinning.

