



10 Must-Carry Items for Your Car This Winter

Winter driving presents its share of challenges, from icy road conditions to car batteries that strain due to the cold. Make sure you're fully stocked up on these must-carry items in an emergency winter car kit this season.

#1 Ice scrapers, snow brushes and a foldable shovel

Clear off your entire car before you drive. Snow and ice can slide from your vehicle's roof and obstruct your view or fly off and hit another car. Choose scrapers and brushes with long handles that allow you to reach the top of your vehicle. Shovel fresh snow or dirt around your tires to help them grip.

#2 Bag of sand or kitty litter

Your car may get stuck in the snow or on an icy spot. Pour sand or kitty litter over your tires and/or on the ground for extra grit to help with traction. You can put your car's floor mats down in front of your tires to get your car out of slippery situations.

#3 Hazard triangles and LED flares

When your car breaks down, you want to be seen by other vehicles and by emergency personnel. Place the reflective hazard triangles behind your vehicle starting at 10 feet and going as far as 100 feet. LED safety flares are waterproof, shatterproof and crushproof and even magnetic and can stick right to your car.

#4 Flashlight

A flashlight can help you find things in the dark or be used to signal passing cars. Pack several LED flashlights or glow sticks for the kids so that everyone in the family has one. They're great fun and an easy way to find everyone in the dark.

#5 Jumper cables and portable battery charger

Low or freezing cold temperatures can turn a weak battery into a dead one overnight. Jumper cables will charge your car's dead battery from another car's. A portable battery charger will jump your battery when another car is not around.

#6 Cell phone charger and portable power bank

Keep your cell phone charged by having a charger in your car. In case your car doesn't start, always have a portable battery or power bank.

#7 Blankets and cold weather clothes

Keep a few blankets or heat reflective blankets in your trunk. Stock warm clothes for every member of the family: old sweatshirts, thick pants, warm socks, boots, mittens, and warm hats. Hand or feet warmers provide warmth in an emergency.

#8 Snacks and water

Keep water bottles and nonperishable snacks in your car through the winter, such as trail mix or nuts/seeds, dried fruit, granola bars, chocolate, dry cereal, crackers, cookies, peanut butter (or other nut butters), rice cakes and pretzels.

#9 Entertainment

Games and activities help kids from feeling stressed and it will help pass the time. Pack a travel game bag with games your kids enjoy. Sing songs, tell jokes and keep the time as light-hearted as possible.

#10 First Aid Kit

Emergency response times may be longer due to icy or snowy conditions. Buy a first aid kit or make your own. Include bandages, gauze, adhesive tape, antibiotic ointment, scissors, saline solution for eye washing or cleaning wounds, aloe vera to treat minor burns, antihistamine for allergic reactions, and anything else your family may need. Add baby wipes, which will help if you or the kids have to go to the bathroom outdoors in nature.

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