



# Professional Winter Driving Tips from GDS

Barron Greenwalt, GDS

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My father has been a professional truck driver my whole life and when I was old enough, I began following my father's example in transportation. Although no longer employed in the transportation industry, I still use the driving tips taught to me from an early age and have maintained an accident free driving history. We all know that life goes on, no matter what the environmental extremes are. Business and industry may slow, but it does not stop during this time of year. You may find yourself having to drive in snow, sleet, and icy conditions. These winter weather driving tips and best practices can contribute to accident free driving to and from your destinations.

## **Slow Down**

Slowing down is the single most important factor that allows you to maintain control of your vehicle.

## **Following Distance**

Keep your speed as low as practically possible. Leave adequate space to stop. Maintain three times the usual following distance, a following distance of 12 seconds.

## **Traction**

Maintaining traction is paramount. Good traction starts with good tires. Tire treads and design patterns make a difference in traction on ice and snow.

## **Breaking**

Brake gently to avoid skidding. If your wheels start to lock up, ease off the brake.

## **Snow Chains**

Snow chains can provide better traction on icy roads. It may prove useful to maintain a set in your vehicle. Be familiar with how to use them by reading manufacturers' user guidelines.

## **Bridges and Overpasses**

Be mindful that bridges and overpasses are likely to be icy in cold weather. Adjust your speed before entering bridges and overpasses. I attempt to maintain the same speed on a bridge as when I entered them so I will not lose traction.

## **Skid Recovery**

If your rear wheels skid, then take your foot off the accelerator. Steer in the direction you want to front wheels to go. If your rear wheels are sliding left, steer left. If sliding right, steer right.

If your front wheels skid take your foot off the gas but do not try to steer immediately. As the wheels skid sideways, they will slow the vehicle and traction will return. As it does, steer in the direction you want to go.

Visualize your vehicle sliding. Now, visualize how you will react. This is a good practice so that you will act properly and regain control of your vehicle.