

+ SAFETY SOLUTIONS

TIPS FOR DRIVING IN RAIN AND FOG





DRIVING IN THE RAIN

Professional drivers should utilize the following techniques to avoid collisions when driving in rain.

- + **Check the weather forecast** before starting your trip and don't drive in extreme rain if you don't have to. Large flashes of lightning can temporarily blind and disorient a driver. The accompanying high winds and heavy rain can create deadly driving conditions.
- + **Do a complete pre-trip inspection** of your vehicle before you leave. Check the condition of your windshield wipers and blades, mirrors, lights, reflectors, defroster, tires and brakes prior to beginning your trip. Make repairs/adjustments as necessary. Worn tires increase chance of hydroplaning.
- + **Clean windows, lights and mirrors.** Dirty surfaces greatly reduce and distort your visibility.
- + **Allow extra time** for weather-related delays.
- + **Exercise caution after a dry spell.** Roads are extremely slippery at least during the first 20 minutes of rain because of grease and oil built up on road surfaces.
- + **Turn off your cruise control** during any kind of adverse weather so you are in control of your vehicle.
- + **Avoid driving alongside other vehicles.** If the other driver loses control, you will most likely be involved in a collision with them.
- + **Don't pass other vehicles** unless it is absolutely necessary, especially on two-lane roads.
- + **Don't make sudden speed or direction changes.** Your vehicle may not be able to react as you need or expect it to.
- + **Signal well in advance** and make sure others see you.
- + **Increase your following distance** to give yourself and those around you the extra space to react safely.
- + **Give other drivers plenty of room.**
- + **Drive in the tracks** of the vehicle ahead of you where water is less likely to be pooled.

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- + **Brake earlier and with less force** than you would normally to prevent sliding.
- + **Watch for stopped or parked vehicles** on the side of the road, on the roadway or parked under overpasses during heavy storms.
- + **Watch for pedestrians** who may not be aware of the traffic.
- + **Never drive through deep or moving water** if you can't see the ground beneath it. Your vehicle could be swept off the road, regardless of how big or heavy it is.
- + **Watch for places where floodwater collects**, particularly on low-lying roads adjacent to streams and in dips under rail or highway bridges.
- + **Watch the contours** not only of the road, but also the fences, trees, hedges and buildings at the side of the road ahead. If they appear to be unnaturally low, slow down at once, because the road is probably flooded.
- + **In heavy rain or fog**, slow down and turn on your four-way flashers. This will help others coming up behind you to notice your vehicle sooner.
- + **Turn on your headlights**, even in a light rain and in gloomy, foggy or overcast conditions, to help other drivers see your vehicle. Daytime running lights are not a substitute since they are not as bright, and all the vehicle lights are not on.
- + **Slow down.** Don't expect your equipment to drive beyond its capabilities. The road, load, vehicle condition and your personal condition are all included in the equation. Slowing down also helps prevent hydroplaning. Even new tires can hydroplane at high speeds.
- + **Do not overestimate your driving skills.** Collisions are caused by many drivers who said, "I can handle it."
- + **Never drive beyond the limits of visibility.** The glare of oncoming lights amplified by the rain on the windshield can cause temporary loss of visibility while substantially increasing driver fatigue.
- + If the rain is extremely heavy, **don't continue driving if you cannot drive safely through it.** Find a safe place to park. The shoulder of the road is not considered a safe place.

DRIVING IN FOG

Dense fog may occur on highways. It is often unexpected, and visibility can deteriorate rapidly. To reduce the risk of a multi-vehicle collision, or reduce the risk when driving through one that has already occurred, please follow these safety tips when driving through fog.

- + **Keep windows and mirrors clean** for improved visibility.
- + **Reduce your speed** to meet conditions. Remember, fog can instantly become thicker.
- + **Turn on your low-beam headlights.** Do not drive with just your parking or fog lights.
- + **Keep all lights, especially marker lights, and reflection tape clean** so others can see you sooner.
- + **Turn on four-way flashers** in heavy fog so others approaching from behind can notice you sooner.
- + **Avoid passing** other vehicles.
- + **Listen for traffic you cannot see.** Turn down your radio.
- + **Use wipers and defroster** as necessary to maximize visibility.
- + **Don't stop on the roadway or shoulder.** Stop only at appropriate parking facilities. If you must stop on the shoulder, turn on your hazard flashers immediately.
- + **Be watchful** for others that may have stopped on the shoulder or are stopped partially in the travel lane.
- + **Turn off your cruise control.**

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