



CURRY'S AUTO SERVICE, INC.
complete automotive service

Trusted Car Care In Your Neighborhood

European Import Domestic
Guaranteed lowest TIRE prices
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Weekdays: 7:30AM - 7:00PM
Saturdays: 8:00AM - 4:00PM

Ten Tips for winterizing your car

1. Change your oil! The oil used should have the right viscosity, or thickness, for your vehicle at this time of year. Oil tends to thicken as it gets colder, and if it's too thick it won't do the best job of keeping your engine lubricated. Check your owner's manual for guidance about which oil to use in different climates and temperatures.
2. When's the last time you replaced your windshield wiper blades? They usually work effectively for about one year, so be sure to invest in some new ones if you're due. Here's another important step to take before you find yourself struggling to see in a blinding storm: Fill up your windshield washer reservoir with windshield washer fluid. Also check to see that your heater and defroster are working properly so you can keep the windshield nice and clear.
3. Give your battery a little TLC. This is an ideal time of year to make sure your battery's posts and connections are corrosion-free and that your battery has all the water it needs. If your battery is more than three years old, have a Curry's Auto Service test its ability to hold a charge. This is a service we perform free of charge.
4. Examine your belts and hoses. Cold weather can do a number on belts and hoses, so they deserve attention. You want to check your belts for cracking and tension. Hoses tend to deteriorate from the inside out. They often fail unexpectedly. Curry's Auto Service technicians have the experience to find a worn hose before it becomes a problem.
5. Check your tire pressure. Your tires must be properly inflated to ensure you'll have the best possible traction as you drive along — and traction is often severely jeopardized in wet, snowy or icy conditions. The air pressure in your tires has likely dropped as the weather has gotten colder. You can generally expect that you'll lose 1 pound per square inch whenever the temperature drops by 10 degrees Fahrenheit. A valuable alternative to air is nitrogen. Curry's frequently uses nitrogen in our customers tires since nitrogen is far less sensitive to temperature change and can actually provide an extra measure of safety for you and your car.
6. Time for a tire check! Weather in Northern Virginia can be anywhere from ice to a foot of snow. Usually it is a mixture of the two known as sleet. Most cars and trucks on the road today have all season tires and most of the time they will handle winter weather just fine with sufficient tread depth. The further North and West you go in NoVA the more snow you can encounter. If you live or work in these areas you know what I mean. You may want to consider switching to a "winter" tire. These tires usually have large tread blocks to better clear snow from the tire giving you better traction. If you are not sure of what is best for you car, give us a call and one of our professionals can help you chose what is best for you and your car.

7. Do you have four-wheel drive or all wheel drive? If so, it's important to check the status of the drive system and be sure it's working correctly. Be sure that the system engages and disengages easily, and that all drivers in your household know how and when to activate the system. Fluids levels and condition is just as important as engine oil. It is a good idea to have it checked prior to needing to rely on it.

8. Get the antifreeze mixture just right. Aim for having a 50-50 mix of antifreeze (coolant) and water inside your radiator. This will prevent the mixture from freezing even at ridiculously cold temperatures. It's easy to check the status of the mixture with an inexpensive antifreeze tester, which you can pick up at any auto parts store. If you are not comfortable doing this yourself, ask us to check it for you. We would be happy to do so and it only takes a few minutes.

9. Prepare an emergency kit. Store this stuff in your trunk during the winter months, especially if a road trip is in your future:

Spare cell phone and charger.

flashlight

blanket

flares

extra boots and gloves

jumper cables

an extra set of warm clothes

small tool kit

water and food, including hard candies

tire gauge

ice scraper

tire-changing equipment

small shovel

first-aid kit

a bag of abrasive material such as sand, salt or non-clumping kitty litter, which can provide additional traction if a tire gets stuck in snow.

Also, keep the gas tank as full as you can to prevent the gas lines from freezing.

10. Know what to do if you get stranded. Don't wander away from your car unless you're completely sure about where you are and how far away help is. Light two flares and situate them at each end of your vehicle to call attention to you. Put on the extra clothes and use the blanket to stay warm. If you have enough gas in the tank, run the engine and heater for about 10 minutes for each hour you're waiting for help. Having an old cell phone in the car can be a lifesaver. Did you know that most cell phones will dial 911 even if the phone is inactive? And if you are like me, you have several phones in a drawer somewhere in your house. Make sure you have a spare with a charger in the glove box.