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Hot Tips For Winter Travel

By Aaron Mazzilli

We've all felt Jack Frost taking a nip at our nose, and facing Jack also means facing the harsh reality that a harsh winter promises, including the toll it's like to take on our main mode of transportation.

It's common knowledge that the tempestuous winter months put our vehicles through greater stress and strain, and can often make minor imperfections into major malfunctions. With that said, experts emphasize the importance of getting your car geared up for winter well advance of the plummeting temperatures.

Battery Operation: Since cold weather can be hard on batteries, checking your battery should be a top priority

- Make sure connections are tight and corrosion-free and that the cables aren't lose.
- Have a technician conduct a load test to further determine your battery's condition.

Check Your Liquid Assets: Professionals point out the need to check your vehicles vital fluids and filters, as well as its hoses, belts, and tires.

- At minimum, get oil and filter change.
- Check you coolant level and make sure the water/antifreeze ration is correct.

Set Your Sights On Safety: Remember, visibility is key for winter driving.

- Make sure you have ample windshield-washer fluid. And make sure to always keep it topped off with proper commercial anti-freeze.
- Check and double-check wipers, their condition, and how they are functioning. You can even choose to switch to winter blades as an option.

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- Inspect headlights, taillights, brake lights and defrosters, and make sure they are in good, working order.

Interior Design: How your car operates on the inside is just as important to how it functions on the outside.

- Inspect floor for cracks or holes that may allow dangerous (and toxic) exhaust gases into your vehicle.
- Ensure that your heater (and defroster) are working.

Check Brakes, Belts And Hoses: Make sure all are in good condition and in working order before hitting the road.

- Top-off brake, clutch and transmission fluids.
- Check pressure on your belts. Also check for any cracking or fraying.
- Look for loose connections on hoses, as well as for unusual bulges, cracks, tears, and holes.

Treading On Thin Ice: Tire pressure and tread depth affect traction in the snow and rain.

- Check the inflation pressure of your tires and make adjustments according to the season and the temperature. This check, say experts, should be conducted several times a year (about twice a month).
- Check your spare tire and make sure you have one.

Getting Your Wheels In Motion: One of the best ways to safely get around in winter is by switching to a climate-friendly tire.

- Replace current tires with tires especially designed for colder, icier conditions.
- Check tread Depth. Keep in mind the shallower, the better.
- Beware of studded tires. They may offer more traction in wintry weather, but can reduce traction of dry roads.

Stay Attuned To Your Car's Needs: Taking care of your car means knowing what it needs and when.

- Check the owner's manual for instructions on how often you'll need a general tune up, including spark plugs, ignition, coil, fuel injection, etc. and get one done just before the brunt of the winter

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season strikes.

- Put a minimum of one coat of wax on the exterior to protect paint against the winter making it easier for snow and ice to simply slip off
- Spray a lubricant (such as WD-40) in all door and trunk locks to prevent them from freezing.

Winterize Your Vehicle Inside and Out: Be prepared in care of emergency

- Stock and emergency kit with flashlight, flares, first-aid kit, blanket, warm clothes, gloves, hat, paper towels, snow shovel, snow brush, ice scraper, washer fluid, high energy food and water, and booster cables, and keep it in your car.
- Keep some sand or other such coarse material in your car to pour under tires to assist with traction if you get stuck on ice or hard-packed snow.
- ALWAYS carry your cell phone with you and make sure it's charged.

Polishing Your Safety Skills: No matter what kind of vehicle you drive or how well you maintain it,

cautious driving is always recommended.

- Invest in an advanced winter driving course.

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Tips For Choosing The Perfect Travel Mug

By Gary Gresham

A good travel mug is a must when you need to take your coffee or tea with you on the road. There are many different types of mugs available, so here are a few tips to consider before you purchase one.

Travel mugs are offered in both stainless steel and plastic with plastic being the least expensive.

Even though stainless steel initially costs more, it will give you much better value for your money.

Plastic mugs can break when dropped and they don't keep your coffee or tea hot nearly as long as the stainless mugs.

You can expect superior performance from a stainless steel travel mug keeping your coffee or tea hot for about an hour. If you are looking for the very best way to keep your favorite beverage hot or cold

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longer, look for a mug with stainless steel double wall insulation.

Stainless steel also cleans up easier than plastic and the plastic liner over time will absorb coffee or tea. This build up will affect the taste of your beverage and the only way to remedy it is to buy another travel mug.

If you still prefer a plastic travel mug, make sure it has a stainless steel liner. The advantages of these are you won't feel the heat on the outside of the mug and you have a variety of colors to choose from.

You should also decide if you want your travel mug to fit a cup holder in your car or if you want it to have a wide bottom for stability.

The advantage of a travel mug that fits a cup holder is you don't have to hold onto it. Just make sure the dimensions of the mug will fit your holder.

If you don't have a cupholder or don't like to use one, you need a travel mug with a wide bottom.

Look for a non-slip wide bottom because not all of them come that way. You don't want it to slide if you let go of the travel mug.

Next, what kind of a lid do you prefer? The lids that snap on can sometimes come off if the travel mug tips over or is dropped. Screw on lids are better because they stay on no matter what happens and that's the idea of a travel mug to begin with.

Also, consider how the beverage hole will be covered and uncovered when you want to drink. Do you like a flap over the drink hole that snaps shut or do you prefer a slide that stays open or closed? Then there is the Press'N'Sip lever design that opens when you push on the spring loaded lever and closes when you let go.

Travel mugs come in a variety of volume sizes too. If you only drink a small amount, consider a smaller 8 oz. travel mug. On the other hand, if you want a large amount of coffee or tea to drink, consider a larger 16 or 20 oz. travel mug.

Once you get the travel mug that is just right for your tastes, hand wash it instead of putting it in the dishwasher. Sometimes soap residue gets left behind either in the lid or in the travel mug and no one likes that kind of surprise. So be sure to rinse it extra good so all that you taste is the rich flavor of your coffee or tea.

If you leave your travel mug in the car while at work, store it away from direct sunlight. That way the hot sun magnified by the windows won't damage the rubber seals in the lid.

Keep these tips in mind the next time you shop for a travel mug so when you fly out of the door with your favorite hot beverage, it will stay in the mug and remain hot until the last drop.

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where you can purchase quality

coffee, tea, cups & mugs, coffee gifts and delicious desserts online. If you are looking for the perfect travel mug he offers you only the top rated travel mugs that he knows you'll be happy with at:

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