



## Keep a safe distance from plows and sanders

In a contest between a snowplow and any other vehicle, the snowplow will be the clear winner. Drivers who try to pass on the right when a snowplow is in operation run the risk of damaging their vehicles, hitting the snowplow, or even going off the road.

On state highways, passing a snowplow on the right is illegal. On most Oregon highways, snowplows have “wing” plows that stick out more than 8 feet from the right side of the truck. In addition, the snow being plowed or blown off the road can contain rocks and other debris damaging to vehicles.

Trying to pass a plow on the left also presents problems. The road behind the snowplow is in much better condition than the road ahead. If conditions are severe enough to require the attention of a snowplow, you should use extra care when trying to accelerate and pass other vehicles. Ruts in the snow can grab tires and icy conditions can make it difficult to control the vehicle at higher speeds.

Drivers should give winter maintenance vehicles such as plows and sanders a wide berth. They travel slowly but pull over periodically to let traffic pass. The best advice is to stay three car lengths behind and give yourself more time to get where you are going.



## Wear safety belts every trip

Safety belts and child safety seats save lives. Oregon Department of Transportation's Safety Division offers tips for using safety belts and child safety seats properly, and explains recent changes in safety seat laws. Buckle up. No excuses - it's the Way to Go!

For more information and a link to a 3-minute video explaining Oregon's safety belt and child seat laws visit <http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/TS/safetybelts.shtml>

# Get a grip on winter roads

## Practice chaining up

In Oregon, there are times when you may be required to use chains on snowy or icy roads. It's important to learn how to install your chains before bad weather strikes.

Chaining up is good for both you and other drivers, especially on mountain roads. Travelers who wait until the last minute to put on chains can block lanes, delaying other drivers and making it difficult for crews to sand and plow the road. You'll do your part to keep traffic moving by putting your chains on early.

It's a lot easier to put chains on for the first time when you don't have to struggle to read the instructions alongside a snowy road. Practice installing your chains at home when the weather is fair. Then when road conditions require chains, you'll already know how to use them.

Here are some tips on chaining up and driving with chains:

- Check your vehicle operator's manual for the right type and size of chains to use. Then follow the manufacturer's installation instructions.
- Ensure chains are the proper size. Don't deflate tires to install chains.

- Don't wait until you lose control of your vehicle before chaining up.
- Pull over to a safe and level area to mount or remove chains.
- Carry a waterproof tarp or plastic sheet to help keep you dry.
- Keep children and pets safe in your car to avoid distraction and injury.
- Pull over in a safe place and retighten your tire chains after you have driven a short distance.
- Pull over and stop immediately if any part of your chain fails or comes loose.
- Don't drive faster than 30 miles per hour when using chains. Accelerate and decelerate slowly. Avoid spinning or locking your wheels.
- Remember: you can slide even with chains, so drive carefully and slowly.



## Traction tires options

Oregon state law allows motorists to use studded tires from Nov. 1 through March 31. Because studded tires damage Oregon highways, ODOT encourages drivers to consider using chains or non-studded traction tires.

Studded tires that meet Rubber Manufacturers Association standards for use in severe snow conditions carry a special symbol on the tire sidewall: a three-peaked mountain and snowflake. Research shows these tires provide better traction than studded tires on bare pavement.

### Studded tire facts

You can use studded tires in Oregon from Nov. 1 through March 31. Driving with studded tires before Nov. 1 or after March 31 is a Class C violation and carries a \$190 fine.

Research shows that studded tires are more effective than all-weather tires on icy roads, but are less effective in most other conditions because they may reduce traction between the road and the tire.

Oregon spends more than \$11 million a year fixing roads and bridges damaged by studded tires.

When it rains, water collects in the pavement

caused by studded tires and creates dangerous driving conditions. In cold weather, that water can freeze and cause extra-slippery roads.

### Alternatives to studded tires

Chains and chain-like devices

Chains are more effective than studded tires and are becoming easier to use.

Link chains may not be recommended for use on some types of vehicles; check your owner's manual.

### Other traction tires

Traction tires, other than studded tires, provide increased traction in winter conditions.

They work about as well as studded tires on ice, but work better than studded tires or regular tires in most other winter conditions.

These other traction tires cause no more damage to road surfaces than regular tires.

Know Before you Go: Visit [www.TripCheck.com](http://www.TripCheck.com), Oregon's travel information Web site, for up-to-the-minute road conditions and more information on Oregon's chain law and chain requirements. You can also get the latest in road conditions by calling 511.



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