



Vehicle Safety During Winter: Safe Use of Snow Chains

Driving slowly is not enough, though. Some states actually require the use of snow chains to ensure better protection on the road. Read on to know the safety guidelines in the use of this equipment.

SELECTION AND INSPECTION OF SNOW CHAINS

- Choose the appropriate kind of snow chains for your vehicle. Don't get one that isn't used on your vehicle because it looks sturdier or is more affordable.
- Prior to installing them to your vehicle, snow chains must be inspected thoroughly.
- Make sure chains are free of dirt, rust and debris.
- Check to see that all links are in place. Never replace missing links with wire or other unacceptable materials. Also, get rid of chains with links that are worn out.
- Ensure that all hooks are intact and properly shaped.
- Inspect attachment cords to make sure that they are intact and in good condition. Check to see if they have weather cracks.



INSTALLMENT OF SNOW CHAINS

- Before installing snow chains, determine which wheels need them. Some states require that all wheels be installed with chains.
- When handling snow chains, always wear gloves to avoid getting cut by their sharp edges.
- Prior to installation, make sure the vehicle is properly parked with its emergency brake set and its motor shut off.
- Center the snow chains, neatly lay them out in front or behind the tires.
- Start the vehicle, release the emergency brake and slowly drive the vehicle onto the chains.
- Park the vehicle again, turn off the engine and engage the brake.
- Never go under the vehicle to attach or detach hooks, even if you need a jack to install or remove the chains.
- Secure the chains by firmly pulling their ends up over the tire. Make sure to attach the hooks properly.
- Ensure that all the attachment cords are pulled tight and hooked to the chain links or hooks.
- Test the chains by driving the vehicle a short distance and re-inspecting the chains. When a chain slips out of position, just detach the hooks, release the chain and reapply correctly.

The three key elements to safe winter driving are:

- Stay alert;
- Slow down; and
- Stay in control