



# Driving in Whiteout Conditions

## HAZARDS

While it may be ideal to avoid driving when blowing snow is in the forecast, weather conditions can change rapidly, and vary greatly depending on other environmental conditions (i.e. rural areas with open spaces may be more prone to drifting and whiteouts than densely populated urban areas).

Snow and wind can make for very scary and dangerous driving conditions. Whiteout conditions can reduce your visibility to near zero - impairing your view of the road and everything on it. Vehicles' traction may be hampered and unexpected snowdrifts may be present. Without visual references, such as the horizon or landmarks, it is possible for drivers to become disoriented leaving them vulnerable to being struck by other drivers who also can no longer see their surroundings.

## DO's & DON'TS

If you ever find yourself unexpectedly driving through whiteout conditions, there are things you can do, and avoid doing, to help make it to your destination, safely.

- Be Prepared. Always keep a winter emergency kit in your vehicle. It should include jumper cables, road salt/sand, windshield wash, first aid kit, blankets, extra clothes, water/non-perishable food (i.e. energy bars), flashlight, candles, tow rope. Visit [getprepared.gc.ca](http://getprepared.gc.ca) for full details.
- Try to pull off the road into a safe parking area,

if possible. The shoulder of the road is NOT safe in a whiteout.

- DO NOT STOP in the middle of the road. You are placing yourself at risk of being struck by a driver behind you and being the first link in a multi-car accident.
- Gradually slow down and drive to the road conditions.
- Increase your following distance to give yourself plenty of time to brake. DO NOT brake suddenly.
- Turn on your headlights and fog lights if you have them. DO NOT use your high beams.
- Use your hazard lights only to alert the driver behind you to a sudden change in speed or conditions. Do not leave them on continuously, as it they make it hard for other drivers to tell if you are braking or signalling to turn.
- Maintain your focus! Turn off any distractions like the radio etc.
- Be patient. Avoid passing other drivers, changing lanes or tailgating.

**WINTER DRIVING ALERT**  
**WHITEOUT CONDITIONS**

