



Auto

THE RIGHT WAY TO ABANDON YOUR CAR IN A SNOWSTORM

It's the kind of advice you hope you never need. But if you find yourself unexpectedly caught in a snowstorm that leaves you unable to maneuver your car, there is a right way – and a wrong way – to abandon it alongside the road.

Safety experts recommend you:

- 1) **Get as far off the traveled roadway** as you safely can. Don't leave your car in a traffic lane unless you have no choice.
- 2) **Turn on your flashers and leave them on.** A dead battery is better than causing an accident for which you could be held responsible.
- 3) **Set out flares to warn other drivers** if you can safely do so.
- 4) **Make a reasoned judgment about whether to remain with the vehicle and call for help** or to strike out on your own. Some factors to consider are your health, clothing for the weather, distance to the nearest help, and likelihood of your vehicle being hit while you're inside it.

Generally, safety experts recommend you **stay** with your car if you think there's a good chance that a tow truck or other help is coming. Leaving it on the roadway presents many risks, including being involved in a hit-and-run collision with another vehicle or being towed to clear the way for emergency vehicles and facing steep abandoned-car towing fees not covered by insurance.

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If you decide it's best to leave:

- **Leave a note in the window** with your contact information. That improves your chance of hearing from someone who hits your vehicle, or from the authorities.
- **Take your most valuable items with you.**
- **Remove personal information** that could allow a thief to locate your home and loved ones, steal your identity, or otherwise defraud you.
- **Set the emergency brake and lock the doors.** Professional towing companies know how to safely tow your vehicle.

Of course, the best option is never to find yourself faced with the decision about whether or not to abandon a car. Monitor weather reports before a storm to decide if you want to risk going out and getting caught away from home. Equip your car with snow tires and carry chains (that you've practiced putting on) to help you maneuver through snow and ice. Keep emergency winter clothes and supplies in your vehicle to buy you time and protection.

For more tips on readying your car for winter, visit pemco.com and click on our "Auto" page, then "Read more Auto tips," then select "Vehicle maintenance" and "Protect your car in winter."