



## Emergency Vehicle Safety

A roadside emergency can happen at any time, whether your car is new or old. A range of problems can cause it, from a tire failure or mechanical breakdown to running out of fuel. At best, it's an annoyance; at worst, it can compromise your safety. Being prepared with a basic emergency kit can increase your safety, reduce stress, and help you get back on the road faster.

Preplanning and knowing where and how to use the items in your vehicle and kit is the key to making an unexpected delay/emergency go smoothly. Remember to regularly check the air pressure in your vehicle's spare tire.

### Basic kit

This kit is intended to aid you in getting help, signaling your car's presence to other motorists, and tackling simple challenges.

#### Cellular phone

It's not recommended that you talk on a cell phone while driving, but in an emergency, this can be the single most valuable component of your kit. Keep a car charger handy. *Emergency tip: If you have to dial 911, remember that your location and phone number aren't always available to an emergency operator when calling from a cell phone. Be able to give the operator your number and any information you have about your location.*

#### First-aid kit

Choose one that allows you to treat a range of problems from small cuts or burns to ones that require major bandaging.

#### Fire extinguisher

A multipurpose dry-chemical fire extinguisher is available in a variety of sizes. We recommend carrying a compact unit that's labeled 1A10BC or 2A10BC.

#### Warning light, hazard triangle, or flares

If your vehicle is stuck on the side of the road, it's vital that you give other motorists as much warning of its presence as possible, especially at night. Look for a battery-powered warning light that can be placed far from the vehicle. Reflective hazard triangles and flares are also effective and don't need batteries. Be aware and use extreme caution while operating in or beside a street or highway!

#### Tire gauge

This should be used on a monthly basis to check the inflation pressure in all four tires and the spare tire. Because the ambient temperature affects tire pressure, it's also advisable to check the pressure after a significant change in temperature.

#### Jack and lug wrench

Almost all vehicles come with these items for changing a tire. Refer to your owner's manual on where they're located in the vehicle and know how to use them.

**Foam tire sealant or a portable compressor and plug kit**

For minor punctures, a foam tire sealant can get your vehicle back on the road quickly. Be sure to choose a sealant that's labeled as non-flammable and don't consider this a permanent fix. A portable DC-powered air compressor can also be used to inflate a tire and is especially handy for one that suffers from a slow leak. Using a tire sealant is not a permanent fix. Have your defective tire repaired by a professional tire service ASAP.

**Spare fuses**

If you experience an electrical problem, your first check should be for a burned-out fuse. These are easy to check and replace by referring to your owner's manual. Keep an assortment on hand of the proper type for your vehicle.

**Jumper cables or a portable battery booster**

Jumper cables are easy to use as long as you have a second car available to provide a jump. Refer to your owner's manual for instructions. A portable battery booster eliminates the need for a second car.

**Flashlight**

Choose one that is bright and weatherproof and keep a set of spare batteries for it.

**Gloves, hand cleaner, and clean rags**

Protect your hands from cold and injury as you work to fix a problem with your vehicle.

**Pen and pad of paper**

This can come in handy for a range of uses, from leaving a note on the windshield should you have to leave your car to jotting down information after an accident.

**Food and water**

Keep a stash of non-perishable food and water in your vehicle for unexpected delays in travel. Have enough for each passenger. Examples: Bottled water, boxed juices, energy bars, nuts, dried fruit and/or meat.

**Blanket**

You can purchase compact or "emergency" blankets that are not too bulky to store in a vehicle.

**\$20 in small bills and change**

Having cash can come in handy for an endless variety of reasons should you become stranded with your vehicle.