

Snow Chains and Winter Driving

Contact us for pricing.

Shur Grip Z offers a unique combination of performance and convenience features for every user:

- Fastest, easiest installation of any traction product.
- "Designed-in" rubber tightener means there is no need to stop and retighten after installation.
- Better all-around traction performance than conventional tire chains or cables.
- Greater durability than conventional tire chains or cables.
- Better compatibility with anti-lock brakes, traction control, all-wheel drive (AWD) and other electronically monitored control systems.
- MEETS S.A.E. Class "S" clearance requirements or vehicles with limited clearance.
- Low potential for damage to vehicle body and mechanical components, even when abused.

Important Information

Before purchasing or installing winter traction products, please read the following information: Before selecting any traction product, refer to the vehicle manufacturer's recommendation in your vehicle owner's manual. Be sure to pre-fit the chains to your tire and ensure that you have enough clearance for the chains to operate properly. If you have alloy wheels or wheels that protrude beyond the tire sidewall, SCC cautions against using traction products that require a rubber tightener.

Frequently Asked Questions

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Which tires should I chain up?

Traction devices should be installed on the drive tires. On front-wheel drive vehicles this would be the front tires and on rear wheel drive vehicles this would be the rear tires. To retain as much of the normal handling characteristics of your vehicle as possible, SCC recommends installing traction devices on all tires. If you have a four-wheel drive or all wheel drive vehicle refer to your owner's manual for placement recommendation.

What if my owner's manual says, "don't use tire chains?"

Vehicle manufacturers often make this statement if they don't leave enough room around the tire for conventional chains to operate without coming in contact with some part of the vehicle.

If my car has an anti-locking brake system, do I still need chains?

YES! Many people think that ABS systems are an alternative to traction devices. ABS is a great advantage in helping drivers maintain vehicle control, but it's only purpose is to manage the vehicle's available traction more efficiently than a conventional braking system. SCC's "Z" products with diagonal pattern crossmembers, provide constant traction making them more compatible with traction control and ABS.

Do four-wheel drive vehicles need chains?

YES! Although four-wheel drive vehicles have a greater ability to GO than vehicles with a conventional drive system, they do not have any greater ability to STOP on slippery roads.

Which chain is easiest to install?

SCC products that use a "designed-in" rubber tightener allow chains to be installed without moving or getting underneath the vehicle as there is no need to stop and retighten. These products include tire chains sold at Klein Honda.

Which chain is the most durable?

Cable products with diagonal cross member patterns and alloy traction coils. These products include tire chains sold at Klein Honda.

Which chain provides the best traction?

Products with diagonal or diamond shaped cross member pattern. These products include tire chains sold at Klein Honda.

Winter Traction Information

We believe the following statements are facts. Understanding them should help any driver operate a vehicle in winter conditions with greater safety and security.

Vehicles, roads & friction

"Traction" is taken for granted when operating modern vehicles under normal driving conditions, even if the road surface is wet. They simply go, stop and corner as we expect them to.

Traction results from the points of contact between the vehicle and the road surface. Rubber tires produce traction through friction when the rubber makes contact with hard, paved surfaces. A combination of constantly improving compounds and tread designs has made modern all-season radials remarkably effective at producing this friction on wet or dry roads.

When snow or ice cover the roadway, traction can't be taken for granted anymore because the tires are prevented from making contact with the pavement, and contact between rubber and ice crystals doesn't produce much friction.

Anti-lock brakes (ABS), all-wheel drive (AWD) and traction control systems manage the speed of the wheel (relative to the road surface) to maximize friction. ABS won't allow tires to "lock-up" during braking and traction control won't allow the driven tires to "spin" under power, but both types of systems are dependent on the amount of traction that's available to be managed in the first place.

Using leverage instead of friction

The most effective way of producing traction on ice and snow-covered roads is leverage. In other words, the tire (or something firmly attached to the tire) must penetrate the frozen surface so that the rotation of the tires can influence the direction and speed of the vehicle.

Snow tires (or even all-season radials) can work well in new or "powdery" snow because rubber is harder than snow and the aggressive tread is capable of penetrating the surface.

On hard-packed snow or ice, conventional snow tires do not give much useable traction because they can't penetrate the surface. In this case, "studded" snow tires will work noticeably better than tires without studs.

All-season radial tires equipped with any of SCC's winter traction products will produce more traction on ice or snow-covered roads than any snow tire or studded snow tire. This is simply because the steel crossmembers penetrate the frozen surface deeper and wider than any type of snow tire, producing more leverage.

Winter driving safety

The most difficult and dangerous aspects of winter driving are braking and cornering. Nearly any modern passenger vehicle can "go" on snowy roads; it's the inability to maintain control while braking and cornering that causes most accidents and injuries.

Any vehicle equipped with SCC winter traction products will be capable of greater performance on ice and snow-covered roads than it would be if it were not so equipped. This includes vehicles equipped with studded snow tires, all-wheel drive (AWD), anti-lock brakes (ABS) or any type of traction control system.

Control will always be better with traction products mounted on ALL tires than it will be if they are only mounted on some of the tires.

Winter driving tips

Always carefully read the owner's manual and the installation instructions before installing any winter traction product. All winter traction products wear out and eventually break with use. They also break due to misfit or misapplication. If this should happen, stop immediately and repair or remove the broken parts to avoid any damage to your vehicle.

Park on firm, level ground and always set the emergency brake before installing any winter traction device under any circumstances.

Always pre-fit the traction products to the vehicle before they are actually needed. While winter traction products are uniform in size, tires are not. They vary in size by manufacturer, age, tread and type. Snow tires may require larger traction products than a like-sized highway tire. The same is true for larger, more aggressive tires such as all-terrain or off-road.

If using a traditional link chain, always inspect each chain link and carefully remove any tangles or twists prior to installation. Premature breakage in link chain is usually caused by 1) Driving on twisted links; 2) driving at speeds greater than 30 mph; 3) extended driving on bare pavement; and 4) excessive tire spinning.

Avoid spinning the tires. Remember, when your tires are spinning, you don't have traction. When starting from a stop on slick roads, depress the accelerator lightly, starting slowly to maintain traction and avoid spinning.

Avoid locking your brakes. The best braking technique is a pumping action. Begin braking early; much sooner than you would on dry pavement. If you do not have ABS and you feel your wheels lock up, release the brakes and re-apply. Vehicles equipped with ABS automatically perform this pumping action internally.

Avoid quick maneuvers. Slow down. Keep the speed under control and steer smoothly and more gradually to prevent skidding under hazardous driving conditions.

If a cross member should break during use, stop immediately and remove or replace it, otherwise severe damage can occur to the vehicle.

After use, always rinse your traction products with fresh water and spray them with an all-purpose lubricant such as WD-40, before storing them. This will help retard rust and insure a longer product life.

Before beginning your trip, know the correct road conditions and weather forecast for the areas that you will be traveling. You can access this information by clicking on the U.S. Department of Transportation link and Weather Channel links to the left of this page.

Be prepared for changing conditions. Keep a survival kit in your car consisting of a blanket, water, high-energy snacks, highway warning devices, and a flashlight with fresh batteries. If you have a cell phone, make sure the batteries are charged.

Be aware of potentially dangerous icy areas such as shady spots, bridges and overpasses. Approach these areas with caution. They are usually the first areas to get icy and often the ice is invisible.

Always keep your car's windows, mirrors and lights clear of snow and ice.

Keep a safe distance behind other vehicles, especially plows and sanding trucks. Remember that stopping distances are doubled or tripled on snow or ice. Never pass a snowplow or sanding truck as they throw gravel that could damage your vehicle. Do not leave your vehicle parked along the roadside where it could be hit by other vehicles or snowplows.

It is always a good idea to tune up your vehicle before the winter driving season arrives. Be sure to check things like the battery, tires, windshield wipers, heater and anti-freeze level. It is also a good idea to keep a good-fitting set of traction devices in your vehicle all winter season as weather conditions can change quickly. Remember to try them on and check for proper fit before you actually need to use them.

Remember to stay alert and drive smart! Always wear your seatbelt!