## Fall Car Care 2014

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# The Ford F-150 redesigned for 2015

he Ford F-150 has long been one of the best-selling automobiles in the United States and Canada, annually ranking among the 10 best-selling cars and trucks in both countries.

In spite of that popularity, the 2015 Ford F-150 underwent a redesign as Ford looked to build a stronger, more productive and more efficient model that is more attuned to the things 21st century drivers care about. Designed to deliver more towing and hauling capability than its predecessors, the 2015 Ford F-150 employs high-strength aluminum alloy for its body and bed.

The use of aluminum alloys in the body and bed of the 2015 Ford F-150 enabled Ford to build a truck that weighs as much as 700 lbs. less than previous models, making the vehicle more fuel efficient and saving drivers money at the gas pump as a result. The chemistry of the aluminum alloy used in the 2015 Ford F-150 was standardized



2015 Ford F-150 Platinum. Image courtesy of The Ford Motor Company.

to facilitate recycling, and the aluminum scrap can be reclaimed and sent back into the manufacturing to minimize waste.

While the body and bed of the 2015 Ford F-150 employs aluminum alloys, the truck's new and fully-boxed steel frame is stronger and more rigid than previous models, and

many steel components of the 2015 F-150 are designed to enable using a roll-forming process that minimizes weight and maintains strength.

Engines for the 2015 Ford F-150 include a 3.5-liter V-6, a 2.7-liter EcoBoost V-6, a 3.5-liter EcoBoost V-6, or a 5.0-liter V-8. Ford's

newest EcoBoost engines include auto start-stop technology, a variable-displacement oil pump and stronger yet lighter connecting rods designed to make the engine more efficient but still powerful enough to handle the jobs that F-150 drivers need to handle.

The 2015 Ford F-150 is available in five models, which is down from the 10 models made available in years past. Depending on which model a buyer prefers, LED headlights and taillights are available,

and additional available safety features include a lane-keeping assist, blind-spot monitoring, rear cross-traffic alert, and a 360-degree rearview camera.

Long a favorite among truck buyers, the Ford F-150 has been redesigned for 2015 in an attempt to improve overall performance and fuel efficiency.





# Staying safe on those wintry roads

Many people will remember the winter of 2013-14 for all the wrong reasons. Record low temperatures and heavy snowfall were the story last winter. With winter now on the horizon once again, many motorists are looking for ways to ensure their daily commutes or holiday trips to visit family and friends are as safe as possible.

When wintry conditions, including snowfall, compromise driving conditions, it's best for motorists to stay home. But avoiding roadways altogether is not always an option, so motorists who simply must venture out onto the roadways this winter can employ the following strategies to ensure they safely arrive at their destinations.

Many drivers are unsure if they need winter tires. All-season tires may suffice for those drivers who live in regions where heavy snowfall is uncommon. But winter tires are designed to perform when the temperatures are especially cold and in driving conditions featuring ice, slush and snow. Drivers who live in regions where snowfall is significant or even expected to be significant may want to install winter tires just to be on the safe side. Some drivers mistakenly believe that vehicle features such as anti-lock braking systems

and traction control make their tires more capable of handling wintry roads. But such features do not provide more traction. ABS and traction control only prevent drivers from over-braking or overpowering the traction of their tires. Only better tires will improve traction.

Winter weather can make roadways unsafe even in areas that have not witnessed a single snowflake fall from the sky. Wet winter roads can quickly turn into icy winter roads, and no ABS system or traction control device can prevent a car that's traveling too fast from skidding out. Poor visibility is another reason to drive slowly in winter. Peripheral vision is often compromised when driving in winter, as dirt, salt or sand buildup on windshields and side windows and mirrors can make it hard for motorists to fully view their surroundings. Even if your vision is not compromised, a fellow motorist's might be. So ease up on the gas pedal in winter so you have more time to react to potentially adverse conditions.

In addition to driving carefully, motorists also should leave extra room between their vehicles and the vehicles in front of them. In such conditions, for every 10 miles per hour drive a minimum of four



car lengths behind the motorist in front of you. So if you are driving 50 miles per hour, be sure to leave 20 car lengths between you and the car ahead of you. This gives you ample time to react and builds in some extra response time should your visibility be compromised.

Of course your vehicle should be maintained regardless of the season, but it's especially important that your vehicle perform at its peak in winter. A vehicle's battery and windshield wipers are a winter driver's best friend, but only if they are operating at optimal capacity. Being stranded on a roadside in winter is more dangerous than in any other time of year. That's because driver visibility is more compromised in winter, and it can be hard for motorists to see or avoid vehicles on the side of the road. Maintain proper fluid levels and make sure your battery is charged and the gas tank is full before making any winter trips.

Wintry conditions often make driving especially hazardous. But drivers who adopt certain habits when driving in winter can greatly reduce their risk of accidents.

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# Reducing the cost of your commute

Though the number of telecommuters is on the rise, a large number of people still commute to work each day. According to a 2011 report from the U.S. Census Bureau, 85 percent of American workers drive to work and have an average commute time of between 25 and 30 minutes. While many people drive five miles or less to work each day, some still travel 35 miles or more each

Commuting to work can be costly. Costs associated with fuel, tolls, wear and tear on a vehicle, or even public transportation fees can quickly add up, but the following suggestions can save commuters a substantial amount of money.

· Change your work schedule. Many employers are amenable to alternate work schedules to help their employees reduce the number of days they must to travel to the office. Rather than working five eight-hour days, employees may be able to work four 10-hour days. One less day of commuting each week can add up to considerable savings over time. Those who cannot streamline days may be able to modify the times they go into work and leave. Avoiding rush hour can reduce time

spent in traffic, improving fuel economy as a result.

• Establish a carpool or rideshare program. Carpooling with colleagues can dramatically cut commuting costs. Rather than driving to work alone, split the week with others going in the same direction who have similar work schedules. Each member of the carpool can contribute some money to pay for fuel and tolls. In addition, time spent commuting may pass

more quickly when there is conversation on the way to work, and carpoolers can take advantage of high-occupancy vehicle lanes on the highway.

· Explore mass transit options. Although mass transit may not be the most direct method of getting to work, it is typically more affordable than driving. What's more, putting the commute in the hands of a bus driver or train conductor means commuters can spend time catching up on



sleep, reading or listening to music.

- · Trade in your vehicle. Gas guzzlers can eat away at commuting budgets. Commuters who invest in compact, fuel-efficient vehicles can drastically reduce their commuting costs.
- · Investigate employee discounts. Employers may have relationships with nearby parking garages that entitle their employees to discounts on parking expens-

- es. Otherwise, some companies enable workers to set aside pre-tax dollars to use toward commuting fees.
- · Speak with a tax professional. Some commuting costs may be tax deductible. Men and women should speak with their accountants to see if commuting expenses can be written off.
- · Work part-time from home. Many workers split their time between the office and a home office. Having the ability to remotely log in to work cuts commuting costs and other expenses involved with traveling to
- · Move closer to the office. Living too far away from the office can escalate commuting costs. If possible, trade in a remote residence for one closer to the company to save money.

Commuting costs are an inevitable part of working life. But by following a few strategies, workers can trim expenses involved with getting to and from work each day.

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#### How to efficiently dig out your car after a storm

The arrival of cooler, shorter days is often a precursor to winter storms dominated by snowfall. A snow-covered landscape can make for an appealing image. But heavy snowfall also makes for extra work, especially for drivers who must dig their vehicles out of the snow after each storm.

Some people live in suburban areas where they can park their cars in driveways or garages, while others live in cities and have to park on the street, where snow plows can do a wonderful job of burying vehicles underneath mounds of snow. Rescuing a car or truck from a pile of snow can be tricky and time-consuming, but there is a process that can make the job easier.

- · Begin by clearing out the tail pipe of the car. This is a vital first step because failure to do so can back harmful carbon monoxide gas and other fumes into the car. Take the time to clear out the rear of the car, including the taillights, so you will have improved visibility.
- When the exhaust pipe is clear, turn on the car. Some people prefer to put the defroster on right away. Others wait until the vehicle warms up before doing so. Having a warm car will melt some of the



accumulated ice and snow and make it easier for you to clear the car.

· The right tools make faster work of the task at hand. A shovel is a necessity, and a telescoping snow broom/ice scraper can be helpful. This allows you to safely push the snow off the roof of the car. Some regions fine drivers who do not remove snow from the roofs or hoods of their cars, so take the time to clean such snow before driving.

- · Work from the top of the vehicle down. Otherwise, you will end up negating all of your work by throwing fresh snow on the areas you already cleared.
- · By now the defrosters should have kicked in sufficiently enough to make it

simple to clear snow from the windshield and rear window. Use some deicing windshield fluid to dislodge wiper blades if they have frozen to the windshield. Some drivers leave their wiper blades standing on end and away from the windshield prior to a big storm to prevent them from freezing to the windshield. Consider this trick if you're especially worried about the blades freezing to the glass.

- · Use your shovel to carefully remove as much snow as possible from around the tires. Be careful not to puncture the tire with a metal shovel. Try to create a tire path in the direction you plan to move the vehicle. So if you will be backing out of the driveway, clear the way behind the car. If traction is a problem, use a bit of rock salt or cat litter behind the tires to give them more grip. Slipping a car mat under the tires also can provide much-needed traction.
- · Exercise caution if you're digging out on a busy road. You can make yourself visible to other motorists with traffic cones. Do not shovel the snow in the path of oncoming vehicles.

Shoveling out after a snowstorm is a task few people enjoy, but it can be done safely and efficiently.

#### You have the right to choose your repair shop!

Did you know you have the right to choose your repair shop? When a claim is made with your insurance carrier, they may choose to send your vehicle to a repair shop that works best for them. The problem with that is what's best for your insurance carrier is not always what's best for you. If you need a windshield replaced, they may send someone over with replacement glass, whether it's snowing, sleeting or raining.

If a company comes to your home or workplace during bad weather to install a windshield or window during bad weather, it could be unsafe. Make sure you choose a repair shop with certified installers, a controlled environment and guarantees their work. Most companies do direct billing to your insurance company with no out-of-pocket cost for covered work. Newburgh Auto Glass, right here in walden, is always here to help.

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### Replacing your vehicle safety belt after a collision

Seat belts and air bags are safety devices that can limit or prevent injury in the event of an accident. Drivers and passengers tend to take these devices for granted, but these safety measures can greatly reduce a person's risk of injury or even death.

Although seat belts do not degrade as quickly as parts of a vehicle that need frequent servicing, there are some instances when seat belts should be replaced.

Seat belts, like car seats and air bags, are considered by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to be single-use items. Seat belts are designed to work just once - protecting and immobilizing a passenger in the event of a crash.

Seat belts are more advanced than they were when first introduced in vehicles. Early seat belts were options on cars. It wasn't until Saab first introduced seat belts fitted as standard in 1958 that the practice became commonplace. Since then, seat belts have been redesigned many times to make them even more effective. They have a pretensioner, which reels back slack on the seat belt. Pretensioners preemptively tighten the belt to prevent the occupant from jerking forward in a crash. They can be activated in a bad crash or any crash



Seat belts can protect passengers only if they are in good working form. They likely need replacement after a collision.

severe enough to deploy an air bag.

Seat belts are equipped with locking retractors, which give us some movement while still providing a means to limit move-

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mike@wallkillbodyshop.com carole@wallkillbodyshop.com ment in the event of a crash. Retractors equipped with inertial locking mechanisms stop the belt from extending off the reel during severe deceleration.

Both of these safety belt components may effectively work only once. After an accident, the ability of pretensioners and retractors may be compromised. The fabric seat belt itself may have been marginally stretched out in the crash.

It's adviseable to replace any seat belts that were in use during a crash to ensure the belts will offer the same measure of protection should a collision occur in the future. Some manufacturers also recommend changing all of the safety belts in the vehicle, even if they weren't in use at the time of the crash. The vehicle owner's manual should include recommendations regarding when to change seat belts. If it does not, drivers can speak with a dealer-ship mechanic.

Seat belts that are frayed or do not operate properly, regardless of whether or not they were involved in a crash, should be replaced. Safety experts advise having seat belts inspected and possibly replaced after 10 to 15 years of use. One can never tell how older seat belts will stand up in an accident. If the seat belts have a built-in indicator, verify that they haven't been stretched during regular wear to warrant replacement.





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### Protecting visibility is essential in hazardous driving conditions

Driving defensively is the best way for motorists to avoid accidents and protect themselves and their passengers from the risks of the road. But the importance of defensive driving is magnified when driving in hazardous conditions, especially when drivers' vision is potentially comnromised

Driving when visibility is poor can test the skills of even the most seasoned and careful motorists. Though even novice drivers know to be especially cautious when driving in snow or heavy rain, extreme weather is not the only thing that can make roadways hazardous for motorists and their passengers. Highway construction that produces debris, poorly lit roadways and driving during certain times of the day when everyone seems to be in a rush can all compromise drivers' vision. As a result, it's imperative that motorists take steps to protect their vision when driving in hazardous or even potentially hazardous conditions.

- Replace old or ineffective wiper blades. Maintaining wiper blades is an easy preventative measure drivers can employ to protect their vision, yet many motorists are unaware of just how frequently their vehicle wiper blades need to be replaced. Wiper blades should be changed every 90-120 days, as the blades can easily grow brittle and ineffective over time. Depending on how frequently they are used, wiper blades can wear out rather quickly, especially on older vehicles with pitting on the windshield. Wiper blades are relatively inexpensive to replace, and can make a world of difference when driving in hazardous conditions.
- · Don't forget to maintain your windshield. A windshield can be a motorist's best friend or his worst enemy when driving in hazardous conditions, but savvy drivers know there is no excuse for the latter. Windshield clarity is especially



Treated windshields can be a big help in preventing rain from obscuring driver vision.

important when driving in hazardous conditions, and windshields that have been treated with a repellant are significantly safer than those that have not.

"Driving in wet weather is inherently dangerous, and driving risks increase considerably with the inability to see clearly through the windshield," said Dennis Samfilippo, General Manager of Philips Automotive.

A one-time treatment just a few times per vear keeps windshields clean and visibility at a maximum. The Philips Windshield Treatment Kit is a do-it-vourself kit that can make windshield glass easier to clean for up to six months after application and can be used by anyone, from veteran auto enthusiasts to novice do-it-vourselfers. In just a few minutes, drivers can dramatically improve their vision thanks to the kit's unique, long-lasting hydrophobic technology designed specifically to coat windshield glass and make it easier to

remove items that may obstruct a driver's vision, including ice, dirt and even bugs. Drivers can even take advantage of a new instructional YouTube video titled "Windshield Treatment Kit Video," which shows users the exact steps they need to take to help improve their field of vision in

difficult driving conditions. The video can be found at www.philipsautolighting.com/ windshieldkit.

- · Check windshield washer fluid. Windshield washer fluid is one of those things drivers typically only notice when it isn't there. Routinely inspect windshield washers to ensure they're working properly, and top off windshield washer fluid so you know it will be there when you need it.
- · Clean interior glass and mirrors. It's easy to overlook interior glass and mirrors when cleaning a car, but a dirty vehicle interior can be as dangerous as it can be unsightly. While coffee-stained cup holders or spilled snacks under vehicle seats are largely cosmetic concerns, dirty interior glass and mirrors can significantly compromise a driver's vision. When cleaning the interior of their vehicle, drivers should remove any film that has built up on interior glass and mirrors. Such buildup, which is often thicker in smokers' vehicles, can reduce vision and create a hazy reflection from the sun, putting drivers and their passengers at risk.

More information is available at www. philips.com/automotive.



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