Informal Guide to Winter Driving and Car Ownership in Quebec
Quebec's winter climate can be a challenge for those unaccustomed to snow ❄️ and cold temperatures 🥶. Knowing the rules, best practices, and necessary equipment can make the experience of winter driving safer and more enjoyable. Here are a few tips to help you prepare:

1. Preparing your car for winter

https://saaq.gouv.qc.ca/en/road-safety/modes-transportation/automobile/maintenance-safety/winter-preparation

Essential changes to make to your car:

- Winter tires 🛞: Winter tires are mandatory in Québec from December 1 to March 15. They are specially designed to provide better grip on snow and ice.
  Buy winter tires
  Here are some stores where you can buy winter tires: Costco, Walmart, Canadian Tire, Garage, Marketplace, etc.

- Battery check 🔋: Extreme cold can affect the performance of your car's battery. Make sure it's in good condition, or replace it if necessary.

- Antifreeze fluid ❄️: Check that your coolant tank contains an antifreeze suitable for winter temperatures. This will prevent the engine from freezing.

- Snow brush and washer fluid : Carry a snow brush and make sure you have enough washer fluid 💦, as snow and dirty mud quickly dirty your windshield. Keeping a 4-liter bottle of windshield washer fluid in the car can avoid putting your safety at risk ⚠️, especially if you can't buy any nearby 🛒. You can buy washer fluid at any gas station ⛽.



- Heating and defrosting 🔥❄️: Check that your car's heating and defrosting system is working properly to ensure optimum visibility and driving comfort 🚗.

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2. Safe winter driving

- Reduce your speed 🦕: Snow and ice make roads slippery. Adapt your speed to the weather conditions, even if it means going slower than the speed limit.

- Increase your safety distance ↔️: The space between your car and the car in front of you needs to be greater in winter to avoid accidents. It takes longer to stop on icy roads
.
- Avoid sudden braking 🚫: On icy or snow-covered roads, don't brake suddenly. Gently apply the brakes, release, brake, release... Avoid sudden movements so as not to lose control of your vehicle.

- Use headlights at all times 💡: In winter, days are shorter and often cloudy, so it's important to use your car's headlights to make sure you're seen.

- Keep an emergency kit ⛑️: Prepare an emergency kit including blankets, gloves, jumper cables, a shovel, salt or sand, food, water, a potted candle, and a lighter.

- Anticipating snowstorms 🌨️: Avoid driving during a snowstorm: If a storm is coming, it's best to stay at home if possible. If you absolutely must drive, be prepared to adjust your route to avoid the most dangerous areas.

3. Winter parking 🚗

- Clearing snow from your car: When leaving a parking lot, take the time to clear the snow and ice from your vehicle before setting off. Don't leave snow or ice on the roof of your car, as it could come off while you're driving and obstruct other drivers' visibility.

- **Don't park on the street** 🚫: In winter, snowploughs 🚜 have to clear the streets. At night, even if the roads are clear, don't park on the street because you could be towed.

4. Laws and regulations to know 📜

- **International driver's license** 🌍: If you're an international student, make sure you know whether your driver's license is valid in Quebec. As a general rule, foreign driver's licenses are valid for six months. After that, you may need to obtain a Quebec driver's license.
- **Fines for non-compliance** 💸: Not having winter tires or driving an ill-prepared vehicle can result in fines.

*This document is informal. The College cannot be held responsible for any decisions related to driving, car ownership, or the country's laws.