

How to care for your Tesla when snow and ice is predicted

Work in Progress

It's Winter

Your Tesla requires some special care and feeding during the cold winter months, such as:

- Improve your cold battery's performance
- Prevent windshield wiper damage
- Prevent side mirror damage
- Prevent window and door handle damage
- Prevent charge port damage
- Reduce issue due to obstructed cameras
- Supercharger best practices

Cold battery

A cold battery may not charge until it warms up

Charging rate may be slow

Snowflake next to range means full driving range not currently available

- A blue snowflake icon appears on your touchscreen when some of the stored energy in the battery is unavailable because the battery is cold. Regenerative braking, acceleration, and charging rates may be limited. The snowflake icon disappears when the battery is sufficiently warmed.

What to do?

- Where possible and when plugged in, precondition your battery and cabin

Autopilot degraded

Autopilot features may be degraded or unavailable

What to do?

- Clean cameras and sensors when it's safe to do so

Wipers

Windshield wipers may get stuck with ice buildup

What to do?

- Turn off wiper Auto Mode when you anticipate ice buildup
- Set wipers to Service Mode*
- Model 3/Y: Turn on Defrost in the Tesla app
- Model S/X: Use heated wiper setting (if available)

Caution: Never pull Tesla wipers away from windshield

* There is debate about whether or not to set wipers to service mode. If wiper auto mode is set to 'off', and you have the defrost option available in the Tesla app, then by not using Service Mode you won't run the risk of the wipers trying to move out of service mode while still frozen to the windshield.

Mirrors

Side mirrors can be damaged if moving from folded to extended position

What to do?

- Disable exterior mirror auto-tilt when the vehicle is shifted into reverse (Controls > Mirrors > Mirror Auto Tilt)
- Disable fold/unfold exterior mirrors (Controls > Fold/Unfold Mirrors)
- Exterior side mirror defrosting occurs whenever the windshield or rear defrosters are operating
- Side mirror heat and charge port heater turns on by toggling rear window defrost setting or defrost in app

Charge port

The rear charge port might not operate properly with snow and ice buildup

What to do?

- The charge port heater turns on by toggling rear window defrost setting or 'Defrost' in the Tesla app

Windows and door handles

Windows iced up

What to do?

- Defrost or precondition (hopefully on wall power) for as long as is needed via the Tesla mobile app

Caution: If window doesn't auto lower, press it down gently after opening before closing door

Door handles iced up

What to do?

- Push on narrow side of handle to break ice, and/or thump lightly on handle
- Better - lubricate door handle pivots and rubber seals with WD40 to prevent sticking

Supercharging

Supercharging rate is reduced in the cold

What to do?

- Navigate to a supercharger to maximize charge rate by preconditioning your battery while driving

For more information:

- Much of the information presented here was gleaned in part from presentations given by the [Tesla Owners Club of Pennsylvania](#). Consider joining an Owners Club in your area to get more information like this, and to connect with other Tesla owners.