

# OPINION

## Winter Car Survival Guide

BY MACKENZIE KNORR



Photography provided by IndyStar  
At least it's not Blizzard of '78 bad (Yet).

**M**INNESOTANS ARE NO STRANGERS to the cold. Snow, ice, and polar vortexes seem to be common occurrences six months out of the year in Minnesota. However, these winter wonders usually don't bring everyday life to a standstill. People are still expected to get to necessary places, such as school and work, which means tackling the worst part of winter: driving.

Caring for your car during the cold months is vital when it comes to safety. Making sure your car is in good shape can make all the difference when taking on icy roads and snow storms. Good tires are important for maintaining traction on slippery blacktops, so you should check your tires often for lasting tread and overall quality. Pay attention to the sound of your car; most old cars always have some sort of weird clank or shudder, but drivers should be mindful of new or strange sounds. Having a safe and reliable engine will help to ensure that you reach your destination.

Your heating system is another key component when looking at your car's health. Defrost and working fans will make for a comfortable ride, even in -40 degrees. For more than just cosmetic reasons, you should be sure to wash your car's windows and headlights often, as the slush and mist from other cars can dirty them quickly, making visibility low. Commuting in the winter usually entails longer drive times because of slowed or stopped traffic. If you plan ahead and leave early, the weather conditions don't have to affect your punctuality.

Lastly, there are a few important items you should always keep in your car. A roadside emergency kit is extremely helpful in case your car runs into trouble on the road. Most kits include bright orange cones, jumper cables, and emergency first aid equipment. Extra layers are also essential when it comes to safety. Having an extra hat, pair of gloves, and warm winter boots can come in handy if you end up stranded. At the very least,

make sure to keep a snow/ice scraper in your vehicle to combat the unwanted elements that may accumulate on your windows.

The winter weather in Minnesota can create serious and dangerous situations. Being prepared for any issue that might arise can make your winter driving experiences seem less daunting. For any venture into the unpredictable climate, arm yourself with the necessary tools to stay safe. †

## February's Sunshine: Redefining Valentines Day

BY MATTHEW IUNG

**I**F YOU HAVEN'T NOTICED, there is a lot of hate surrounding the Valentine's Day holiday (and love that comes with it) from singles, couples, and even some historians. It seems that every year, one of the well-known news outlets runs this very article. Depending on where your opinion falls, this is either a noble tradition that is meant for candy and card companies to make money or a beautiful opportunity to express your love for your mate.

I want to use this article to present a third option. I believe that Valentine's day is for people who need a reminder of warmth. Let's look at it this way, February is a wretched month, especially for people like us who live above the snow line. In December we have holidays, in January we bring in the new year while on break from classes, and then, there's February. With its unpredictable and rather miserable weather, it occupies a strange place of stagnation for a lot of us. It's not really getting warmer, and unless you were born in this godforsaken month, then what's there to celebrate? Groundhog Day? Yeah... that sounds fun.

On the surface, the holiday is an excuse to take someone out on a cute date, or a reminder (as I walk through Target to grab protein bars), to grab some flowers as well. It's not a bright light of a holiday, however, it has the potential to be a warm stopover on our way to the spring thaw. Flowers light up a room, chocolate distracts your senses from the dry air, and good company is the ultimate source of warmth and comfort.

It's not perfect and each individual may have to do their own sort of work to make Valentine's Day a worth-while event, but whether you use this as an excuse to go on a first date, or a time to get together with other single friends, it can be an opportunity to find just a little bit of light during this cold and unpleasant time of year. †

## How to Stay Organized in the Chaos of a New Year

BY ELHAM MOHAMUD

**A**S THE NEW YEAR ROLLS AROUND, we are bombarded with the overwhelming feeling of "new year, new me," making it difficult to set a clear goal and be organized in your thoughts. There is so much change happening at once and it can feel like the year is slipping away from you. To get ahead of this feeling, here are three tips on making 2019 the most productive and organized year.:

### 1. Invest in a planner!

Planners are the perfect way to stay organized in the new year. It is a place to write down all important information so you never miss another assignment or a birthday! There is only so much your brain can keep stored, and writing it down relieves all the pressure. If you don't have one already, get a planner! You will thank me later.

### 2. Daily Goals

The stress of the new year usually comes from the resolution that you've promised yourself. New Year's resolutions are these huge milestones that we would love to see ourselves reach, however, it is more beneficial to start small. For example, if your goal for 2019 is to be more productive, try setting your alarm an hour earlier than you usually wake up. Do that for a few days and your body will adjust, gradually making you into an earlier riser. These small daily goals will become second nature to you, and then you will be able to move on to other goals. Instead of only working on a single, large-scale goal for the entire year, you will be accomplishing many small goals on your way there!

### 3. Self Care

As we over extend ourselves to make the next year better than the previous, it is necessary to take the time to slow down and practice self-care, whether that is a having a relaxing bath, going for a run, or just deciding that you're going to binge watch your favorite TV show. Self care is necessary to continuing positive habits and not letting yourself burn out. †